Prayers for Today

compiled by

Samuel McComb D.D.

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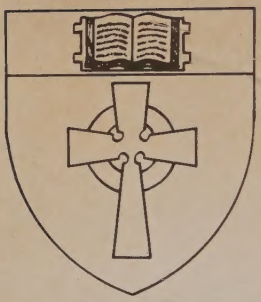

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Prayers for Today

BOOKS BY

SAMUEL McCOMB, D.D.

GOD'S MEANING IN LIFE

PRAYER—What It Is and What It Does

FAITH—The Greatest Power in the World

THE NEW LIFE—The Secret of Happiness and Power

HARPER & BROTHERS, NEW YORK
[ESTABLISHED 1817]

Prayers for Today

With a series of Meditations from Modern Writers

✠

COMPILED AND EDITED BY
SAMUEL McCOMB, D.D.
Author of "FAITH" "THE NEW LIFE" "GOD'S MEANING IN LIFE" ETC.

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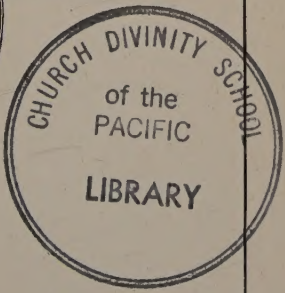

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PRAYERS FOR TODAY

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Published March, 1918

C-S

In Memoriam

William Graham, M.D.

Purdysburn House, County Down, Ireland

In friendship, devoted; in duty, untiring; in service, a follower of Him who came "not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

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Contents of Prayers

NO.	TITLE	PAGE
I.	A Prayer for the Spirit of Prayer *Author Unknown*	1
II.	For Transformation of the Past *George Matheson*	3
III.	For Perfect Trust in God *John Henry Newman*	5
IV.	For Devotion to God *From Henry VIIIth's Primer (Modernized and adapted)*	7
V.	For Humility *J. G. Whittier*	9
VI.	For the Fulfilment of Love's Desires *H. Youlden (Adapted)*	11
VII.	For the Joy of Brotherhood *George Matheson*	13
VIII.	For Knowledge *Henry S. Nash*	15
IX.	For Faith *W. E. Orchard*	17
X.	For Growth in Faith and Virtue *James Martineau*	19
XI.	For Freedom from Evil Thoughts *Samuel McComb*	21
XII.	For Divine Strength in Life and in Death *John Henry Newman*	23
XIII.	For a Heroic Temper *Charles H. Brent*	25
XIV.	For Grace to Commune with Things Eternal *G. A. Simcox*	27
XV.	For Strength and Light *Benjamin Jowett*	29

NO.	TITLE	PAGE
XVI.	For Security in God *Charles Wagner*	31
XVII.	For a Life in Tune with the Infinite *W. J. Robinson*	33
XVIII.	For an Obedient and Unselfish Spirit *Samuel McComb*	35
XIX.	A Morning Prayer for Blessing on the Work of the Day *Walter Rauschenbusch*	37
XX.	For a Right Place in Life *I. O. Rankin*	39
XXI.	An Evening Prayer for Self-knowledge *James Martineau*	41
XXII.	For Freedom and Hope *Samuel McComb*	43
XXIII.	A Morning Prayer for Belief in the Beauty and Work of Life *S. A. Tiffle*	45
XXIV.	A Morning Prayer for Purity and Love *Author Unknown*	47
XXV.	An Evening Prayer of Thanksgiving *Author Unknown*	49
XXVI.	For the Joy of Reconciliation, Liberty, and Sympathy *J. H. Jowett*	51
XXVII.	For Spiritual Strength *Sir Rabindranath Tagore*	53
XXVIII.	A Prayer of Desire *Christina G. Rossetti*	55
XXIX.	For Faithfulness in Work and Trial *James Martineau*	57
XXX.	For Sincerity in the Work of Life *George A. Miller*	59
XXXI.	For Joy *Henry S. Nash*	61

NO.	TITLE	PAGE
XXXII.	For Fellowship with God and with Man. *Edward S. Ames*	63
XXXIII.	For Grace to Profit by a Thorn in the Flesh. *W. De Witt Hyde*	65
XXXIV.	For Consecration of the Unconscious Life. *Thomas Arnold*	67
XXXV.	For a Spirit of Helpfulness. *Walter Rauschenbusch*	69
XXXVI.	A Penitential Prayer. *Walter Rauschenbusch*	71
XXXVII.	For Self-surrender to God. *Samuel McComb*	73
XXXVIII.	For the Love of Friends. *Author Unknown*	75
XXXIX.	For the Vision of Christ in All Souls. *R. W. Gilder*	77
XL	For Victory in the Battle of Life. *George Dawson*	79
XLI.	A Morning Prayer for Encouragement. *J. R. Miller*	81
XLII.	An Evening Prayer for Divine Help and Blessing. *R. L. Stevenson*	83
XLIII.	For the Blessedness of Self-giving. *W. Angus Knight*	85
XLIV.	A Penitential Prayer. *Samuel McComb*	87
XLV.	For the Spirit of Kindness. *George A. Miller*	89
XLVI.	For a Spirit of Love to God and Man. *Author Unknown*	91
XLVII.	For Inspiration in Service. *George A. Miller*	93
XLVIII.	For a Fruitful Life. *Charles J. Ames*	95

NO.	TITLE	PAGE
XLIX.	For a Sense of the Divine Presence. . . *Andrew V. V. Raymond*	97
L.	For Self-control . . . . . *Lucy R. Meyer*	99
LI.	For a Quiet Heart . . . . . *George Dawson*	101
LII.	For a Generous Spirit . . . . . *George Matheson*	103
LIII.	For the Influence of the Divine Spirit . . *Edwin Hatch*	105
LIV.	For Patience . . . . . *Isaac O. Rankin*	107
LV.	For the Divine Indwelling . . . . . *E. B. Pusey*	109
LVI.	For Devotion to the Kingdom of God . . *Mary Carpenter*	111
LVII.	For Spiritual Refreshment . . . . . *Frances P. Cobbe*	113
LVIII.	For the Graces of Penitence and Courage *R. L. Stevenson*	115
LIX.	For Fellowship with God in Love and Service . . . . . *W. Floyd Tomkins*	117
LX.	For a True Vision of Life . . . . . *Samuel McComb*	119
LXI.	For Spiritual Reality . . . . . *Samuel McComb*	121
LXII.	An Evening Prayer for the Presence of God *Author Unknown*	123
LXIII.	For a Sense of God's Love . . . . . *Frances P. Cobbe*	125
LXIV.	In the Evening of Life . . . . . *Author Unknown*	127
LXV.	For a Sense of the Soul's Greatness . . *George Matheson*	129

NO.	TITLE	PAGE
LXVI.	Thanksgiving for Unanswered Prayer. *H. W. Beecher*	131
LXVII.	A Prayer of Adoration. *Samuel McComb*	133
LXVIII.	On New Year's Day. *Samuel McComb*	135
LXIX.	A Christmas Prayer. *Author Unknown*	137
LXX.	An Easter Prayer. *W. E. Orchard*	139
LXXI.	For Spiritual Blessing in Sorrow. *Author Unknown*	143
LXXII.	For an End of War. *Author Unknown*	145
LXXIII.	For Faith in the Victory of Goodness. *W. De Witt Hyde*	147
LXXIV.	A Soldier's Prayer. *Sir George Colby*	149
LXXV.	For Trust in God's Guidance. *Phillips Brooks*	151
LXXVI.	For Courage in Bereavement. *W. De Witt Hyde*	153
LXXVII.	For Divine Help in Every Emergency. *P. C. Mozoomdar*	155
LXXVIII.	In Behalf of a Friend Who Has Passed into the Unseen. *W. E. Gladstone*	157
LXXIX.	For Divine Instruction. *Christina G. Rossetti*	159
LXXX.	In Memory of a Friend Who Obeyed His Country's Call. *Samuel McComb*	161
LXXXI.	For International Peace. *Samuel McComb*	163

NO.	TITLE	PAGE
LXXXII.	THANKSGIVING FOR THE REVELATION OF A FUTURE LIFE . . . . . *W. De Witt Hyde*	165
LXXXIII.	A PRAYER OF INTERCESSION FOR THE WORLD *Author Unknown*	167
LXXXIV.	A PRAYER FOR OUR ENEMIES . . . . . *Samuel McComb*	169
LXXXV.	A PRAYER FOR ONE WHO HAS PASSED OVER *Basil Wilberforce*	171
LXXXVI.	FOR COMFORT IN THE PRESENCE OF DEATH *George B. Foster*	173
LXXXVII.	A MEDITATIONAL PRAYER FOR PEACE . . . *Walter Lowrie*	175

Contents of Meditations

TITLE	PAGE
The Inmost Meaning of Prayer Is Harmony with the Divine Will . . . . . *Benjamin Jowett*	1
Atonement for Past Sins Is Every Man's Duty . . *John Caird*	3
The Mutual Indwelling of God and the Soul Is the Be-all and the End-all of Life . . . . . *Henri-Frédéric Amiel*	5
The Highest Joy Is the Joy of Serving God . . . . *Elwood Worcester*	8
Only in Sorrow Is Power Transmitted from One Soul to Another . . . . . *W. Boyd Carpenter*	10
From Goodness Virtue Always Goes Forth . . . . *George Harris*	11
Justice Is the Harmony of All Virtues . . . . . *Newman Smyth*	13
Genuine Science Has No Quarrel with Genuine Piety . . . . . *Auguste Sabatier*	15
Faith Is to Religion What Experiment Is to Science *Samuel McComb*	18
Let No Untoward Experience Weaken the Supremacy of the Soul . . . . . *H. Youlden*	19
Thoughts of Evil Are Not Necessarily Evil Thoughts *F. R. Tennant*	21
The Present Life Should Be Lived in the Light of the Life to Come . . . . . *R. W. Church*	23

TITLE	PAGE
Of the Wonderful Power of Our Wishes *M. Maeterlinck*	25
Blessedness Comes Not by Escape from Trouble, but by Victory Over Trouble *Francis G. Peabody*	28
Renunciation Is Each Man's Own Secret *Jonathan Brierley*	30
We Must Interpret the Universe by What We Find in the Human Soul *Author of "The Creed of Christ"*	31
All Things Are Possible to the Man Who Loves Goodness *Samuel McComb*	34
The Unattainable Ideal Is Also a Part of Man *A. Seth Pringle-Pattison*	36
Our Work Should Be the Expression of Our Best Self *Henry C. King*	37
"Every Man's Life Is a Plan of God" *W. J. Tucker*	39
In Self-examination Seek to Get a Clear Vision of Yourself *John Ruskin*	41
The Morality of Acquisition Must Be Supplanted by the Morality of Sacrifice *Charles Wagner*	43
Every Man Can Become a Hero after the Pattern of Christ *L. H. Schwab*	46
God Is the Only True Motive of Conduct *T. T. Munger*	47
True Life Consists Alone in Love *Leo Tolstoi*	50
Christ Does Not Trust Himself to a Divided Heart *Author of "Patience of Hope"*	51

TITLE PAGE

Our Duties, Not Our Rights, Have the First Place 53
Mandell Creighton

No Compromise in the Affairs of the Spirit . . . 55
Samuel McComb

The Best Man Is the Truest Man 58
Phillips Brooks

The Higher Righteousness Exceeds All Legal Requirements Inasmuch as It Is Motived by Love . 59
C. F. Barbour

Joy Is the Keynote of True Religion 61
J. C. Murray

Prayer Acts on Character and Character Reacts on Prayer 63
Edward S. Ames

True Prayer Seeks to Bend Man's Will to God's Will 66
From "Religion and Medicine"

By Obedience to These Rules We Can Form Any Habit We Desire 67
W. S. Bruce

We Ought to Help All Who Need Our Help . . . 69
H. Youlden

The New Life Makes Atonement to the Social Order 72
Samuel McComb

Evil Is Overcome Not by Attacking It, but by Setting Our Minds on Virtue 73
George Steven

Pride Is a Denial of the Soul's Greatest Good . . 76
W. De Witt Hyde

What Makes a Man a Christian? 78
James Stalker

Every Man Is Called to Be a Soldier in the Spiritual Order 79
Benjamin Jowett

TITLE PAGE

EVERY VISION IMPLIES A TASK 81
Phillips Brooks

THE MAIN OBJECT OF RELIGION IS NOT TO GET A MAN INTO HEAVEN, BUT TO GET HEAVEN INTO HIM. . . 83
Lord Avebury

SELF-FORGETFULNESS IS THE SECRET OF STRENGTH . . 85
George Matheson

THE TRUE PENITENT SHRINKS FROM NO ATONING PAIN 88
A. L. Sears

THE TRULY KIND SPIRIT SEEKS OPPORTUNITIES OF SERVING OTHERS 89
Francis Paget

OUR TRUE ENVIRONMENT IS GOD 91
J. R. Illingworth

THE GREATNESS OF BEING HUMAN 93
Woodrow Wilson

FAITH FINDS GOD IN THE WORLD AND THE WORLD IN GOD. 95
W. R. Inge

THE END OF HUMAN EVOLUTION IS COMPANIONSHIP WITH GOD 97
E. H. Rowland

CHARACTER AND ACTION ARE BOTH ESSENTIAL TO A HARMONIOUS LIFE 99
Phillips Brooks

FAITH CAN COPE WITH EVERY FEAR 101
Samuel McComb

A VISION OF THE FUTURE WHEREIN ALL PEOPLES ARE SEEN CONTRIBUTING TO THE COMMON WELFARE OF THE RACE 104
G. M. Gwatkin

EVIL DESIRE TO BE REPLACED BY THE SPIRIT OF HOLINESS 105
Sir John Seeley

TITLE	PAGE
True Patience Is the Endurance of Ill in a Spirit of Filial Trust in God . . . . . *George T. Ladd*	107
All True Love Is the Love of God . . . . . *Charles Kingsley*	109
A Steady Progress in the Spiritual Life Is to Be Coveted Earnestly . . . . . *Edward Caird*	111
Self-condemnation Is the Witness to the Presence of the Ideal . . . . . *Henry Jones*	113
An Unforgiving Spirit Inhibits the Love of God . *Author of "The Creed of Christ"*	115
Power and Life Are the Marks of a Genuine Faith . . . . . *Francis G. Peabody*	118
The Mystical Life Means a More Abundant Life *Evelyn Underhill*	120
The Secret of Salvation Lies in the Entire Surrender of the Heart to the Ideal . . . . . *A. L. Sears*	121
Entering into the Soul's Inner Sanctuary . . . *Henry Wood*	123
He Who Loves Christ Cannot but Love All Men *Sir John Seeley*	125
Not Death, but Life, Is Important . . . . . *M. Maeterlinck*	128
We Are Not Merely Caused, but Are Causes . . *Samuel McComb*	129
Sometimes Our Prayers Are Not Answered because God Is Greater Than We . . . . . *James Hastings*	132
Our Union with God Is Unspeakably Intimate . . . *Elwood Worcester*	134

TITLE PAGE

Action, Not Feeling, Is the True Test of Character 135
William James

The Greatness of Life Is to Be Measured Only by the Indwelling Christ 137
Phillips Brooks

In Christ Is Seen the Law of Love Triumphing Over the Law of Sin and Death 140
The Author of "Pro Christo et Ecclesia"

"They That Sow in Tears Shall Reap in Joy" . . 143
T. Cuthbert Hall

War Is Evil, but Not Wholly Evil 145
Gilbert Murray

God Appoints Us the Period of Time in Which We Are to Live and Do Our Work 148
Frederick Denison Maurice

Courage Is an Achievement of the Will Motived by Right and Love 149
Stopford A. Brooke

The Blessing of Grief Is Won by Trust 151
Henri-Frédéric Amiel

Victory Over Death Is Both a Human Task and a Divine Gift 154
Frederick Denison Maurice

Not Self-denial, but Self-devotion, Is the Secret of the Higher Life 155
Lewis Campbell

The Message of Psychical Research Confirms the Premonitions of Philosopher and Saint . . . 158
Arthur Whitzel

The World Is a Manifestation of God, but We Often Falsify What It Would Say to Us . . . 159
Frederick W. Robertson

A Soldier in the Terrors of Battle May Be Governed by the Highest Motives 162
Benjamin Jowett

TITLE PAGE

A False and a True Motive for Condemning War 164
Stanton Coit

A Scientist Makes Confession of His Belief in Immortality 166
Sir Oliver Lodge

A Prophetic Warning of the Doom Pronounced against a False Civilization 167
George Adam Smith

While Resisting Evil We Must Maintain a Will of Good toward the Evil-doer 169
J. C. Murray

Selfish and Passionate Thoughts Shut Us Out from the Unseen World 171
Basil Wilberforce

In the World Beyond Personal Identity Will Be Preserved, and Our Hope of Mutual Recognition Is Justified 174
H. E. Ryle

Acknowledgments 177

Prefatory Note

This book explains itself. It is a collection of prayers suited to our modern needs and especially to the spiritual situation created by the World War. To each prayer is appended a brief extract from a writer of the last or of the present century, intended to serve as a subject of meditation. The editor has not confined himself to any one school of thought, but has boldly appropriated whatever seemed serviceable from all quarters, in the hope that what Dean Stanley used to call "our common Christianity" may commend itself as at once a source of comfort and power, and a bond of union.

We are living on the confines of a new world. Amid the crash of falling kingdoms, the break-up of all we had hitherto deemed most stable, we need to remind ourselves that the great realities of the spiritual world stand fast, and that on these we can build another and a juster civilization than that which now appears to be doomed. But we must first of all rebuild it it in our own souls by faith and prayer. It is as a help, however humble and inadequate, to this work of spiritual reconstruction that this book is now sent forth. Any suggestion by way of in-

creasing its usefulness will be most gratefully received.

In a few cases it has been impossible to trace the copyright of the prayers. It is hoped that the owners will accept the cordial thanks here tendered them for their assumed permission.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in Heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, As it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil: For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Newly Discovered Sayings of the Lord

And he said unto them, Every one that hearkens to these words shall never taste of death.

Jesus saith, Let not him who seeks cease until he finds, and when he finds he shall be astonished; astonished he shall reach the kingdom, and having reached the kingdom he shall rest.

Jesus saith, Ye ask who are those that draw us to the kingdom, if the kingdom is in heaven? The fowls of the air and all the beasts that are under the earth or upon the earth, and fishes of the sea, these are they which draw you, and the kingdom of heaven is within you, and whoever shall know himself shall find it. Strive therefore, to know yourselves, and ye shall

be aware that ye are the sons of the Almighty Father; and ye shall know that ye are in the city of God, and ye are the city.

Jesus saith, A man shall not hesitate to ask concerning his place in the kingdom. Ye shall know that many that are first shall be last and the last shall be first and they shall have eternal life.

Jesus saith, Everything that is not before thy face and that which is hidden from thee shall be revealed to thee. For there is nothing hidden which shall not be made manifest, nor buried which shall not be raised.

Jesus saith, Except ye fast to the world, ye shall in no wise find the kingdom of God; and except ye make the sabbath a real sabbath, ye shall not see the Father.

Jesus saith, I stood in the midst of the world and in the flesh was I seen of them, and I found all men drunken, and none found I athirst among them, and my soul grieveth over the sons of men, because they are blind in their heart and see not.

Jesus saith, Wherever there are two they are not without God, and whenever there is one alone, I say, I am with him. Raise the stone, and there thou shalt find me; cleave the wood, and there am I.

Jesus saith, A prophet is not acceptable in his own country, neither doth a physician work cures upon them that know him.

Jesus saith, a city built upon the top of a high hill and established, can neither fall nor be hid.

Jesus saith, Thou hearest with one ear, but the other thou hast closed.

Prayers for Today

I. A PRAYER FOR THE SPIRIT OF PRAYER

O GOD, who art the Truth, O God who art Spirit, help us in spirit and in truth to worship Thy great name, not acknowledging Thee in one place or at one time only, but in every place and at every time, in all we do and all we see, in our work and in our rest, in our laughter and our tears, in loneliness and in fellowship, in the eye of day and in the shadow of night, beneath the open sky as in the house of prayer, in the heart of the little child as in the wisdom of the man, in the fullness of health and strength and happiness as in the valley of the shadow of death, through which, O Father Almighty, do Thou in Thy mercy bear us to never-ending life and light and love. Amen.

Meditation: The inmost meaning of prayer is harmony with the Divine will.

REGARDING prayer not so much as consisting of particular acts of devotion, but as the spirit of life, it seems to be the spirit of harmony with the will of God. It is the aspiration after all good, the wish, stronger than any earthly passion or desire, to live in His service only. It is the temper of mind which says in the evening, "Lord, into Thy hands I commend my spirit"; which rises up in the morning, "To do Thy will, O God"; and which all the day regards the actions of business and of daily

life as done unto the Lord and not to men—"Whether ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

The trivial employments, the meanest or lowest occupations, may receive a kind of dignity when thus converted into the service of God. Other men live for the most part in dependence on the opinion of their fellow-men; they are the creatures of their own interests, they hardly see anything clearly in the mists of their own self-deceptions.

But he whose mind is resting in God rises above the petty aims and interests of men; he desires only to fulfil the divine will; he wishes only to know the truth. His eye is single, in the language of Scripture, and his whole body is full of light. The light of truth and disinterestedness flows into his soul; the presence of God, like the sun in the heavens, warms his heart.

Such a one, whom I have imperfectly described, may be no mystic; he may be one among us whom we know not, undistinguished by any outward mark from his fellow-men, yet carrying within him a hidden source of truth and strength and peace.

Benjamin Jowett.

II. FOR TRANSFORMATION OF THE PAST

O LOVE unspeakable and full of glory, whose majesty is not to destroy, but to save, save me from myself.

My past relentlessly pursues me. Days that I thought dead live over again; deeds that I deemed buried meet me on the way; be Thou my rearward, O my God.

Fill up that which my life has left behind, undo that which my life has done amiss. Repair the places I have wasted, bind the hearts I have wounded, dry the eyes I have flooded. Make the evil I have done to work for good, so that I myself would not know it. Overrule the acts I did in malice; weave them into Thy divine mosaic, that my very wrath may be made to praise Thee.

Take up my yesterdays into Thine own golden light, and transfigure them there, that I may learn with joyful surprise how even against my will I was laboring together with Thee; so shall my former self find me no more. Amen.

Meditation: Atonement for past sins is every man's duty.

IF the past has already been to you one of wasted opportunities and neglected responsibilities, though *that* it is too late to undo, let us feel that it is not too late to do with redoubled energy what yet remains to be done.

To shake off the lethargy of spiritual indifference, to renounce all unmanly and ignoble selfishness, to respond to the call of duty, to begin a life of earnest, active beneficence, to crowd our days with deeds, and, God helping us, in what remains of life to be as good and to do as much good as we can—for this at least it is not too late.

The harvest indeed is past, the summer is over and gone! Gone are the sweet days of innocence, gone the vernal time of youthful ardor, gone the sunny harvest hours of manhood's effort and activity! But, oh, still happy you if, when the sands of life are running out, in that supreme moment when earth and earthly things shall be passing forever from your sight, you can look back on this last period of your earthly probation with the blessed consciousness that *that* at least has not been given in vain.

And may God forbid that when the last comes to the last, as we lie waiting the inevitable summons, it should be with the terrible conviction that for all the higher purposes of existence, for all the ends for which God has given us our life, our life has been a failure, a failure for which there is now no place of repentance.

JOHN CAIRD.

III. FOR PERFECT TRUST IN GOD

O MY God, Thou and Thou alone art all-wise and all-knowing! I believe that Thou knowest just what is best for me. I believe that Thou lovest me better than I love myself, that Thou art all-wise in Thy providence and all-powerful in Thy protection.

I thank Thee, with all my heart, that Thou hast taken me out of my own keeping, and hast bidden me to put myself in Thy hands. I can ask nothing better than this, to be Thy care, not my own.

O my Lord, through Thy grace, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest, and will not lead the way. I will wait on Thee for Thy guidance, and, on obtaining it, I will act in simplicity and without fear.

And I promise that I will not be impatient if at any time I am kept by Thee in darkness and perplexity; nor will I complain or fret if I come into any misfortune or anxiety. Amen.

Meditation: The mutual indwelling of God and the soul is the be-all and the end-all of life.

THERE is but one thing needful—to possess God.

All our senses, all our powers of mind and soul, all our eternal resources, are so many ways of approaching the Divinity, so many modes of tasting and of adoring

God. We must learn to detach ourselves from all that is capable of being lost, to bind ourselves absolutely only to what is absolute and eternal, and to enjoy the rest as a loan, a usufruct. . . .

To adore, to understand, to receive, to feel, to give, to act: there is my law, my duty, my happiness, my heaven. Let come what will—even death. Only be at peace with self, live in the presence of God, in communion with Him, and leave the guidance of existence to those universal powers against whom thou canst do nothing.

If death gives me time, so much the better. If its summons is near, so much the better. If a half-death overtake me, still so much the better, for so the path of success is closed to me only that I may find opening before me the path of heroism, of moral greatness and resignation. Every life has its potentiality of greatness, and as it is impossible to be outside God, the best is consciously to dwell in Him.

. . . . . .

I thank Thee, my God, for the hour that I have just passed in Thy presence. Thy will was clear to me; I measured my faults, counted my griefs, and felt Thy goodness toward me. I realized my own nothingness. Thou gavest me Thy peace. In bitterness, there is sweetness; in affliction, joy; in submission, strength; in the God Who punishes, the God Who loves.

To lose one's life that one may gain it; to offer it that one may receive it; to possess nothing that one may conquer all; to renounce self that God may give Himself to us: how impossible a problem, and how sublime a reality!

HENRI-FRÉDÉRIC AMIEL.

IV. FOR DEVOTION TO GOD

LOVING FATHER, grant me to covet with a fervent mind those things which may please Thee, to search them wisely, to know them truly, and to fulfil them perfectly, to the praise and glory of Thy name. Order my living so that I may do that which is pleasing to Thee, and give me grace that I may obtain those things which are necessary to my soul's health.

Dear Lord, make my way sure and straight to Thee, so that I fall not in prosperity or adversity. In prosperous things let me give Thee thanks; in adverse things let me be patient; so that I be not lifted up with the one, nor depressed with the other. Grant that I may rejoice in nothing but that which moves me to Thee. Grant that I may be sorry for nothing but that which draws me from Thee.

Let all worldly things be loss unto me for Thy sake. Let me not rejoice with the joy that is without Thee. Draw my heart to penitence and hope, to the steadfast purpose of new obedience. Give me a soul intent upon Thy will, so strong that no unworthy affection shall draw me backward, so stable that no tribulation shall break it. Put within me a diligent spirit to seek Thee. Lead me in the way everlasting, and quicken me with a hope that maketh not ashamed. This prayer I make in Christ's holy name. Amen.

Meditation: The highest joy is the joy of serving God.

IN spite of all the evil that has been spoken of it, happiness is the stone set at naught by the builders, which turns out to be the headstone of the corner; only, to build safely on this stone, it must be placed on its broad side—that is, we must consider not our happiness alone, but the happiness of others.

So God's commandment warns me that I should not purchase temporary happiness at the price of lasting misery to myself or others, for not thus can I please God; but that I should act so as to increase my own permanent happiness and the happiness of other men. In so doing I am pleasing God and obeying His commandments, for God wishes to reap what He has sown in me as much as in another man.

Only beware of thinking that sensual pleasure is also God's pleasure.

At the last it comes to this: whether I sacrifice myself to others, or others to myself; whether I will sacrifice the short pleasure that brings remorse and sorrow, to the joy of serving God, which is followed by no pain; for above all lower joy there is this higher joy and peace of conscience that soars over lower pleasure as a dove soars over the green fields. This joy I have, and this joy God has in me, when I direct my life so that in the broadest sense and for the longest time it serves to promote the happiness, health, and salvation of my fellow-men.

ELWOOD WORCESTER.

V. A PRAYER FOR HUMILITY

Father! I may come to Thee
Even with the beggar's plea,
As the poorest of Thy poor,
With my needs and nothing more.
Not as one who seeks his home
With a step assured I come.
Yet, O Lord, through all a sense
Of Thy tender providence
Stays my failing heart on Thee
And confirms the feeble knee.
If I may not, sin defiled,
Claim my birthright as a child,
Suffer it that I to Thee
As an hired servant be.
Let the lowliest task be mine,
Grateful, so the work be Thine;
Let me find the humblest place
In the shadow of Thy grace.
Blest to me were any spot
Where temptation whispers not.
If there be a weaker one,
Give me strength to help him on;
If a blinder soul there be,
Let me guide him nearer Thee.
Make my mortal dreams come true
With the work I fain would do.

Meditation: Only in sorrow is power transmitted from one soul to another.

WHAT is the secret of power? The secret of power lies in the quantity or the strength of the transmission force within us. I transmit influences all around me and I am at my best as an influence among my fellow-creatures when the forces within me are transmitting themselves in some form or another over the lives and thoughts of others. And a man is therefore at his best, as far as that is concerned, when his transmissible forces are at their greatest.

That is what we should all see with regard to the various affairs of life. When is the poet at his best? When his songs have gone out into the world, when he hears them, as Dante did, sung by the forge and by the women in the market-place. He is at his best when his transmissive force is spreading widely over the land. When is the statesman at his best? When the laws which he has taken care to formulate are being slowly diffused over the country to the benefit and well-being of his fellow-men.

But what is the story before that form of transmission takes place? It is a story of sorrow. You find that men cannot transmit great influences and power over the world without some pang of agony; that just as there is not a child that has crowed in its mother's arms that does not bear within it the story of a pang with which it entered upon the world, so neither is there a single song sung by a great poet, nor a single law framed by a great statesman, nor a single beneficent action done in the world, but there is a story of a long travail of soul beforehand.

VI. FOR THE FULFILMENT OF LOVE'S DESIRES

FATHER OF LIGHTS, from Whom cometh every good and perfect gift, I bless Thee for the brave men and women who have gone before me, by whose example I was reared, and by whose lives I have profited. I bless Thee for the commandments of life that have given me work to do and power to do it. I bless Thee for the beauty and mystery of the love I bear toward my friends, knowing that in them is an exceeding great reward.

Grant that every unselfish desire of my heart may be fulfilled.

If work and waste, worry and failure, have taken life out of me, restore to me the joy of resolution. May friendship with Thee and with my fellow-men be a screen from bitter winds and a spring of pleasant waters. Help me to forgive and cancel every wrong I have suffered; and so move upon the hearts I have hurt that they too may forgive and be merciful unto me and stand by me at all times. Amen.

Meditation: From goodness virtue always goes forth.

TRUE courtesy never overawes with superiority. It always puts others at their ease. It brings out what is best. A great man does not make others feel small. He is not condescending. He is sympathetic, appreciative,

encouraging. Greatness does not repel; it attracts. It does not discourage; it inspires. Greatness and goodness are sympathetic, self-imparting. They were united in Jesus. He was the best great man and the greatest good man in the world. His perfection was a rebuke, indeed. But it was love going out in sympathy and inspiration to transform men into His own likeness.

When a disciple saw Jesus employing power in the service of kindness, he exclaimed, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man," but at the same moment clung to His feet and would not let Him go. Sympathy attracts while it rebukes. The deeper its loving rebuke, the mightier its attracting and transforming power.

A sinless, perfect man, sympathizing with sinful, imperfect men, not refusing obloquy, suffering, and death, in His consuming desire to bring them to themselves, could not pass through the world and leave it unchanged. Great moral personalities, with imperfections, have revolutionized multitudes. They have inspired faith, and men who have faith in somebody are better men.

The sacrifice of Jesus is thought to be the power of regeneration. The sacrifice is regarded as something different from the character, the holiness, the example of Jesus, something which He offered to God. His sacrifice was indeed offered to God and was acceptable to Him. But it was an expression of His character, not anything other and different. It was the giving of Himself, nothing less than Himself, His whole and very self, for men.

GEORGE HARRIS.

VII. FOR THE JOY OF BROTHERHOOD

I AM weary of my island life, O Spirit; it is absence from Thee. I am weary of the pleasures spent upon myself, weary of that dividing sea which makes me alone.

I look out upon the monotonous waves that roll between me and my brother, and I begin to be in want; I long for the time when there shall be no more sea.

Lift me on to the mainland, Thou Spirit of humanity, unite my heart to the brotherhood of human souls. Set my feet "in a large room"—in a space where many congregate. Place me on the continent of human sympathy where I can find my brother by night and by day—where storms divide not, where waves intervene not, where depths of downward distance drown not love.

Then shall the food of the far country be swine husks; then shall the riot and the revel be eclipsed by a new joy—the music and dancing of the city of God. Amen.

Meditation: Justice is the harmony of all virtues.

THE application of personal justice to daily life demands vigorous moral training and ceaseless vigilance. A watchful eye is necessary always in order that one may do no injustice among his fellow-men.

To the clear sense of justice the least things as well as the greatest need to be brought. Justice is a daily obligation in many little things. The habit of justice, acquired by much self-discipline, and perhaps through many failures, will become a fine spiritual tact for right judgment and right doing; the quality of justice, tempered with mercy, is a sweet reasonableness of character, which is one of the most delightful domestic virtues, as well as a most serviceable quality of friendship and good citizenship.

A profitable study of justice may be found in the example of the Son of Man in the minor instances of His instantaneous rightness toward every man and woman whom He met. He was just to each and all with the immediate tact of true love. Such reasonableness and equity in all speech and act is the wisdom of love.

Common sins of our daily conversation disclose often some lack of this reasonable virtue of justness. Uncharitableness is, in its principle of evil, lovelessness of speech; but its want of love betrays also a frequent lack of a just sense of life. . . . Love is always something more than justice; but where a fine sense of what is just is wanting, love itself may easily be betrayed into uncharitable judgment.

NEWMAN SMYTH.

VIII. FOR KNOWLEDGE

FATHER OF LIGHTS, by whose hand the fires of the sun are fed, and who hast kindled in our hearts the desire to know, we bless Thee for leading us into a life wherein light and darkness are so wonderfully mingled. For the darkness and for the light we praise Thee. On our knees we would learn to think. Standing on our feet we would learn to pray.

O Thou in whose being the simplicity and mystery of life do meet together, cleanse our prayers with the sanctity of reason, ennoble our reasonings with the majesty of prayer, and so bring us onward through darkness and through light, till in Thy presence and before our eyes the power that made the stars and the love that exalts our hearts shall kiss each other, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Meditation: Genuine science has no quarrel with genuine piety.

NOTHING is more striking nor more touching than the kind of piety with which science inspires all great men of learning: Kepler, Descartes, Pascal, Newton, Pasteur. . . . Why are all of them plunged in solemn contemplation? What mysterious power bows them before the ultimate and changes their ardent and victorious research into adoration?

From a conquered truth, as from an accomplished duty or sacrifice, some mysterious perfume exhales which makes fragrant the whole soul life and gives it over to humility and joy.

In our days much has been said of the religion of science; it has even been claimed that this religion would do away with all others and reign in their place. This is not true —first, because science is no more the whole of life than thought is the whole soul, and again, because those who speak thus of science speak in the most unreligious way possible.

None the less is it true that the object of science is eminently religious, and that the pursuit of science is an integral part of religion. The religion of science is no more safe from superstition and fanaticism than any other religion, and easily turns to idolatry. But even in idolatry religion forces itself into recognition.

The true religion of science is not that which defies ephemeral results or material power, but that which holds research itself to be holy, the steady ascent of the spirit toward the larger light.

While learned men who fail to recognize the religious character of science narrow and restrict the bounds of their horizon, religious men who fear science and will have none of it no less strike a mortal blow at their own faith.

Why should we permit ourselves to be shut up to the alternative of choosing between an irreligious science and an ignorant or unintelligent religion?

AUGUSTE SABATIER.

IX. FOR FAITH

O GOD, too near to be found, too simple to be conceived, too good to be believed, help us to trust, not in our knowledge of Thee, but in Thy knowledge of us; to be certain of Thee, not because we feel our thoughts of Thee are true, but because we know how far Thou dost transcend them.

May we not be anxious to discern Thy will, but content only with desire to do it; may we not strain our minds to understand Thy nature, but yield ourselves and live our lives only to express Thee.

Show us how foolish it is to doubt Thee, since Thou Thyself dost set the questions which disturb us; reveal our unbelief to be faith fretting at its outworn form.

Be gracious when we are tempted to cease from moral strife; reveal what it is that struggles in us. Before we tire of mental search enable us to see that it was not ourselves, but Thy call, which stirred our souls.

Turn us back from our voyages of thought to that which sent us forth. Teach us to trust not to cleverness or learning, but to that inward faith which can never be denied. Lead us out of confusion to simplicity. Call us back from wandering without to find Thee at home within. Amen.

Meditation: Faith is to religion what experiment is to science.

OUR unbidden thoughts of good, our noblest impulses, the quick-shooting pangs of penitence, the tears that startle us in moments of self-reflection, the aspirations that rise unconquered from every defeat—whence come these high and moving experiences? Not certainly from ourselves, but from the direct and immediate touch of God upon us.

Nor has pyschology anything to say against this intuition; for whatever God does in our mental life must be in accordance with the forms and in obedience to the laws of this life. Otherwise, we could be no more conscious of His influence than we are of His energizing in some remote corner of the physical universe.

We may indeed explain away these inner voices as delusion, or interpret them as the product of our natural surroundings and therefore bereft of all right to command the will—in which case we need not be surprised if they fail of their spiritual ministry and leave us duller and more insensitive than before. Their reality can be tested by their ethical fruits. . . .

We are free to believe or disbelieve. Without the venture of faith we cannot enjoy the characteristic fruits of faith, for faith is the indispensable human condition to the divine work of regeneration.

Faith is to religion what experiment is to science. We can know the transforming, miracle-working might of the Spirit through sympathy, through co-operation in word and act and character with His gracious promptings and suggestions.

SAMUEL MCCOMB.

X. FOR GROWTH IN FAITH AND VIRTUE

O THOU unseen source of peace and holiness, may we come to Thy secret place and be filled with Thy solemn light. As we come to Thee how can we but remember when we have been drawn aside from the straight and narrow way, when we have not walked lovingly with each other and humbly with Thee, when we have feared what is not terrible, and wished for what is not holy in Thy sight.

In our weakness be Thou the quickening power of life. Arise within our hearts as healing strength and joy. Make us obedient to Thy pure and righteous thought. Inspire us with the divine faith, subdue us to the lowly practice of those who have lived as fellow-workers with Thee.

Day by day may we grow in faith, in self-denial and charity, in the purity of heart by which we may see Thee, and the larger life of love to which Thou callest us. Amen.

Meditation: Let no untoward experience weaken the supremacy of the soul.

LIFT up your hearts, and flinch not when these things come upon you:

When events go contrary to your wishes and you are vexed and faint.

When your work seems mean and your calling obscure.

When you remember the time you have wasted, the teaching you did not embrace, the bitter word you uttered, and the prayer for help that you turned from.

When the mind feels too weary to think and the soul too sad to love.

When the world creeps and crawls upon you, and its foolish greatness and gilded idleness seduce you.

When Pleasure smiles and bids you come, and Duty cries and bids you stay.

When you know the depths of beauty you lost by going after false gods, and the light you have missed by the worship of dark words.

When the fancies of youth seem folly and the dreams of other days are gone.

When the old order changeth and the new is not desired.

When those you love are not where they used to be, when the silver cord is loosed and the pitcher broken at the fountain.

Then let your soul shine out and the spirit become supreme.

H. Youlden.

XI. FOR FREEDOM FROM EVIL THOUGHTS

SPIRIT of holiness and grace, turn not away, as I would bring to Thee the sin and disorder of a soul beset by evil imagining and base desire.

I have done despite to the dignity of Thine image upon me. I have wasted my spiritual treasure; I have not revered myself nor the majesty of Thy gifts. How can I cleanse my heart or waken to the shame of the earthly mind unless Thou shine into my soul, unless Thou surprise me with Thy splendors before which every vileness must shrink away?

Be present with Thy power to unite my heart to love Thy name, to bring into captivity every thought that I may always commune with what is high and holy in Thy sight and rejoice only in the fair and fragrant things of virtue and of honor.

Kindle Thou within me a flame of pure aspiring, to consume every grosser passion, that from my life, henceforth, as from a lamp of Thine, a light may shine upon the ways of men. Amen.

Meditation: Thoughts of evil are not necessarily evil thoughts.

DESIRES cannot but be experienced by human beings, the realization of which would be incompatible with obedience to the divine will. These must be fled from, or stifled, or controlled, if we would remain sinless in spite of their appearance in the field of our consciousness.

The thought of evil is not necessarily an evil thought; the impulse that is dominant at a particular moment is not necessarily that which is most deeply rooted in the self, and may even be quite incongruous with those that express the habitual desires of the personality. Feelings, emotions, impulses, and desires of various kinds can no more be prevented from arising, at least when first they obtrude themselves upon us, than can the organic craving for meat and drink when those things have long been withheld.

But all these modes of consciousness, when they are present, may be prevented by the will from influencing its action. For the will can direct the mind's attention toward or away from particular objects. It can summon up rival impulses to those which at the moment may be most vividly present. It can thus strengthen weaker, and weaken stronger, "motives."

The involuntary idea of an end in itself pleasant to contemplate, but the pursuit of which would involve sin, is not polluting, not evil or an evidence of evil character in the subject whose mind it "enters," until the will causes it to be retained, dwelt upon, and cherished, for the sake of lawless enjoyment.

Nothing "from without" the inmost seat of the personality—the moral intention of the will—"pollutes the man"; only that which comes from within, bearing the will's impress and so evincing the real desire and aim of the man, his "personal" attitude toward the good and toward God.

F. R. Tennant.

XII. FOR DIVINE STRENGTH IN LIFE AND IN DEATH

O LORD, support us all the day long of this troublous life, until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over, and our work is done.

Then of Thy great mercy grant us a safe lodging, and a holy rest, and peace at the last; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Meditation: The present life should be lived in the light of the life to come.

IT is on our own responsibility, that we are, as we say, taken up with by the present. We can break away, if we will, it may be with trouble and sacrifice, from the enchanted bonds.

We speak of a life occupied exclusively by work which leaves no room for other things. But our words make life a much simpler thing than it is. The same man may lead, naturally and rightly lead, not one, but several distinct lives. He may lead one life in his profession and business. He leads another life in his family and among his friends. He may lead another, quite as absorbing, quite as characteristic, in the pursuit of some favorite line of literature or science or art; and he has time and interest, and serious thought for all, without sacrificing, even without subordinating one to the other.

The most occupied and eager life has its reserved moments, its pauses and retirements, when the man is, and feels himself, alone. They may be for many uses. They may be for dreams, for ambitions, for regrets. They may be for his secret sins, his hatreds, his impurities, his pride. But they may be, too, for the discipline and forethought of another and greater life.

The thing is that the busiest life, the life which makes the most of opportunities and conditions of the present time, and aims the highest at its object, is not incompatible, unless we choose, with the most resolute preparation for another life to come.

"The world is not nothing, because it is transient." And the faithful servant is he who uses to the utmost whatever talent has been assigned to him in the manifold system of visible things, uses it with his whole heart and strength and enthusiasm; uses it as if it were all he had to do; and yet is ever conscious that all that he is passing through here is but the antechamber of what is to be his real life, and that to be fitted for all that he may meet there, and its tasks, all that will make demands on his character and will and affections, is the real reason why he is here.

R. W. Church.

XIII. FOR A HEROIC TEMPER

GRANT, O Lord, as Thou hast cast my lot in a fair ground, that I may show forth contentment by rejoicing in the privileges with which Thou hast strewn my path, and by using to the full my opportunities for service.

In hours of hardship, preserve me from self-pity and endow me with the warrior's mind, that even in the heat of battle I may be inspired with the sense of vocation and win the peace of the victor; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Meditation: Of the wonderful power of our wishes.

GO where we will, the plentiful river of life flows on, beneath the canopy of heaven.

It flows between prison walls, where the sun never gleams on its waters, as it flows by the palace steps, where all is gladness and glory. Not our concern the depth of this river, or its width, or the strength of its current, as it streams on forever, pertaining to all; but of deepest importance to us is the size and the purity of the cup that we plunge into its waters.

For whatever of life we absorb must needs take the form of this cup, as this, too, has taken the form of our thoughts and our feelings, being modeled, indeed, on the breast of our intimate destiny as the breast of a goddess once served for the cup of a sculptor of old.

Every man has the cup he has learned to desire. When we murmur at Fate, let our grievance be only that she grafted not in our heart the wish for, or thought of, a cup more ample and perfect. For, indeed, in the wish alone does inequality lie; but this inequality vanishes the moment it has been perceived.

Does the thought that our wish might be nobler not at once bring nobility with it; does not the breast of our destiny throb to this new aspiration, thereby expanding the docile cup of the ideal—the cup whose metal is pliable still to the cold, stern hours of death?

No cause for complaint has he who has learned that his feelings are lacking in generous ardor, or the other who nurses within him a hope for a little more happiness, a little more beauty, a little more justice. For here all things come to pass in the way that they tell us it happens with the felicity of the elect, of whom each one is robed in gladness and wears the garment befitting his stature. Nor can he desire a happiness more perfect than the happiness which he possesses, without the desire wherewith he desired at once bringing fulfilment with it.

If I envy with noble envy the happiness of those who are able to plunge a heavier cup, and more radiant than mine, there where the great river is brightened, I have, though I know it not, my excellent share of all that they draw from the river, and my lips repose by the side of their lips on the rim of the shining cup.

M. Maeterlinck.

XIV. FOR GRACE TO COMMUNE WITH THINGS ETERNAL

LORD, Who endest not, and bringest all things to an end; Who changest not, and from Thee change passeth upon all things; Who sleepest not, and givest sleep to all creatures of Thy hand:

Grant to us, we beseech Thee, that our good things may pass from us easily till we find them in Thee joyfully.

That our evil things may pass from us quickly and our offenses be covered by Thy charity.

That in the world which was before us, and shall be after us, we may see evil divided against itself and hasting to destruction, and good changing into better, that it may go forth conquering and to conquer.

Grant to us, so to refresh ourselves, among lights that set and flowers that fade, that we may grow to desire the pleasures laid up at Thy right hand for evermore, and the perpetual shining of the Sun of Righteousness.

Grant to all whom Thou hast created, if haply they may feel after Thee, and find Thee, such a pilgrimage through the wilderness of this world, that they may come, by how many ways soever, into the King's highway at last, and enter thereby into the one city that hath foundations and dwell therein forever.

And so bring us all of Thy mercy in patience and

hope to the sleep of death and the morning of resurrection.

And this we desire in the name which is above every name, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Meditation: Blessedness comes not by escape from trouble, but by victory over trouble.

BLESSEDNESS is . . . not separable from suffering; and among the things which are added to one who seeks God's Kingdom is the bearing of one's own cross.

Such is the paradox of the Christian character. It is to be blessed, but it is not to be sheltered. It hears the word, "My peace I give unto you," but it hears also that other word, "Not as the world giveth"; it is the saving of the soul, but the saving is through losing; it is the house built upon a rock, yet the porter of that house must watch.

The teaching of Jesus evades neither the problem of pleasure nor that of pain. The Christian character takes account of both. It leads to blessedness, but it anticipates hardness. Its end is reached not by escape from trouble, but by victory over trouble.

The peacemakers are to be blessed; but the peacemakers are not so much those who avoid war as those who contend for equity. They are not seekers of peace; they are makers of peace. What they are seeking is the Kingdom of God and His righteousness; and the blessedness of peacemaking is thus added to them. The outcome of righteousness is blessedness; but the process of righteousness is sacrifice. FRANCIS G. PEABODY.

XV. FOR STRENGTH AND LIGHT

WE have not loved others in all classes of society, as Thou, O Lord, hast loved us. We have not thanked Thee sufficiently for the treasures of knowledge, and for the opportunities of doing good, which Thou hast given us in this latter day.

We have worried ourselves too much about the religious gossip of the age, and have not considered enough the fixed forms of truth. We have been indolent, and have made many excuses for falling short in Thy work.

And now, O Lord, in these difficult times, when there is a seeming opposition of knowledge and faith, and an accumulation of facts beyond the power of the human mind to conceive; and good men of all religions, more and more, meet in Thee; and the strife between classes in society, and between good and evil in our own souls, is not less than of old; and the love of pleasure and the desires of the flesh are always coming in between us and Thee; and we cannot rise above these things to see the light of Heaven, but are tossed upon a sea of troubles—we pray Thee be our guide and strength and light, that, looking up to Thee always, we may behold the rock on which we stand, and be confident in the word which Thou hast spoken. Amen.

Meditation: Renunciation is each man's own secret.

RENUNCIATION, once for all, in view of the eternal. It seems a good doctrine, after all. Only let us not misunderstand it.

It offers no commission to idleness, to apathy, to indifference. It means anything but an empty world or an empty soul. On the contrary, it gives us a full-blooded vigor because it gives a full-blooded hope. It is a doctrine of values, of what are the higher and what the lower.

The man who embraces it must beware of one thing. He must not seek to impose his renunciation upon other people. The beauty of it is that it is each man's own secret. You cannot make your growth that of your neighbor. You cannot impose it on your neighbor. Try it, and you will assuredly fail. Your only success will be in becoming a nuisance.

It is, we say, each man's own secret, the secret won out of his experience, his traffic with life, with time, with eternity. But, oh! it is a great secret. It is the secret of accepting the universe, with all its infinity, its depth of meaning; the universe with its apparatus of sense in front and with its spiritual behind; with its fleeting moment and its timeless underneath; the secret which, when the world seems most vacant, makes it for us most filled with God; which opens to us the meaning of the apostolic word of "having nothing, and yet possessing all things."

JONATHAN BRIERLEY.

XVI. FOR SECURITY IN GOD

O GOD, save me from the world I comprehend not, the world of fatality and fearful shadows. Lead me into Thy luminous realm, where all is clear through trust in Thee. Let not my living soul fall into the grasp of necessities insensible and dead.

What though I be afflicted, if I know that Thou knowest it—that Thou art its beginning and its end! What though I walk in the dark, if Thou art there! Give me inward calm, and if not joy, then such surrender as befits a son.

When the whirlwind passes, hide me underneath Thy wing and make my weakness strong by Thy presence. If I am lost, find me; if I fall, stay Thou near by. Amen.

Meditation: We must interpret the universe by what we find in the human soul.

IT is not the universe as seen by man's bodily eye that is divine, but the universe seen as it really is, seen as God sees it, seen, in the unity and totality of its all-pervading life, by the all-seeing eye of the all-sustaining Soul.

It is not until we can see the universe as it really is that we are free to identify it with God. But if we are to see the universe as it really is, we must look within. The highest and best thing that man knows of is his own ideal

self. Primarily, then, and also finally, man must seek for God in his own soul. If and so far as he can find God there he will find Him elsewhere; and the nearer he grows, by the expansion and evolution of his own inner life, to the God within, the wider is the world that he sees to be illuminated by God's presence.

When the unattainable goal has been reached, when man has become what he really is, has found his true self, then and not till then is he free to say, "I am one with the All-Father, and therefore at last I am I"; and then, and not till then, is he able to realize that the universe, the All of Being, is divine.

For if God the Father is the true life of nature, God the indwelling Spirit is the true self of man; and as the Father and the indwelling Spirit are one God, so are the true life of nature and the true self of man one life and one self.

ANON.

XVII. FOR A LIFE IN TUNE WITH THE INFINITE

O UNSEEN POWER that rules and controls the destinies of the children of earth, teach me the symphony of life so that my nature may be in tune with thine. Reveal to me the joy of being loving, self-sacrificing, and charitable.

Teach me to know and play life's game with courage, fortitude, and confidence. Endow me with wisdom to guard my tongue and temper, and learn with patience the art of ruling my own life for its highest good, with due regard for the privacy, rights, and limitations of other lives.

Help me to strive for the highest legitimate reward of merit, ambition, and opportunity in my activities, ever ready to extend a kindly helping hand to those who need encouragement and succor in the struggle.

Enable me to give a smile instead of a frown, a cheerful, kindly word instead of harshness and bitterness. Make me sympathetic in sorrow, realizing that there are hidden woes in every life, however exalted or lowly.

If in life's battle I am wounded or tottering, pour into my wounds the balm of hope and imbue me with courage undaunted to arise and continue the strife. Amen.

Meditation: All things are possible to the man who loves goodness.

THE new man is an optimist. Neither men nor demons daunt him. He is conscious that all the higher forces of the universe are ranged on his side; all things are working together for his good; new accessions of strength and self-confidence fill him with boundless hope for himself and for others.

The vices and follies which he laments receive a new interpretation; they are transformed into a ladder whereby he climbs to unexpected heights of goodness; the moral blunders of the past become stepping-stones to higher things. Even the consciousness that the power of evil still lurks within, which is probably the worst enemy of the new life, is eventually overcome.

The man breathes a new and stimulating air; he is lifted above his ordinary and empirical self. Evil has lost its prestige. Under the old order of things he thought that he had to go on sinning and repenting; now he is possessed with such a love of righteousness that as he looks back over the years he wonders how it was ever possible for him to have fallen under the power of such cheap and tawdry seductions. . . .

His optimism is all-embracing. He despairs of no man, however sinful, however lost to all that is good. For in his own case life had to be built up afresh from the very foundations. And what this spiritual reconstruction has done for him it can do for everybody.

SAMUEL MCCOMB.

XVIII. FOR AN OBEDIENT AND UNSELFISH SPIRIT

FATHER, I thank Thee for work and for the opportunity to work. I rejoice that in working I reflect some broken gleam of Thy glory. Thou fillest the past and the present in all worlds with Thy tireless energy, yet is there no fret or haste in all Thy doing.

Grant that I also may do my appointed tasks with a sense of ease and mastery, always conscious that I am greater than they, and ever ready for still nobler efforts.

Save me from sullen discontent, from fruitless war with the circumstances of my lot. Make my heart obedient that by the untoward things of experience I may win a larger and freer life. Uphold me with the faith that Thou hast called me into fellowship with Thy perfect Son who, when He dwelt among us, went about doing good.

In this faith be it mine to cheer the mourner, raise up the fallen, relieve the needy, forgive the wrong-doer, and praise the lover of simplicity and goodness. While I give to others, give Thou to me, that I may grow more and more in the spirit of helpfulness and generosity, both in word and deed. Amen.

Meditation: The unattainable ideal is also a part of man.

MAN'S experience is not limited, in the moral life, to the "is" of his actual achievement, or, in the contemplation and production of the beautiful, to the beauty which the artist has succeeded in embodying in his poem, his painting, or his symphony. And, as in the quest of beauty, so in the life of moral endeavor. The best and noblest looks up to a better and nobler. With strange mingling of ardor and despair he strains his eyes toward an unapproachable perfection. Hence Browning's familiar paradox that life's success lies in its failures, and that the divine verdict, in contrast to the world's, is passed, not upon the paltry sum of a man's deeds and attainments, but upon the visions of goodness which were his own despair:

> What I aspired to be
> And was not, comforts me.

Such a passage requires, of course, to be read with understanding. The question is not of the casual inoperative wish, or the formal acknowledgment of the more excellent way, on the part of those confirmed in self-indulgence.

Obviously, where there is no attempt, there can be no failure. It is the vision of goodness which has pierced a man with a sense of his own unworthiness, the ideal after which he has painfully limped—it is of these things that the poet speaks.

A. Seth Pringle-Pattison.

XIX. MORNING PRAYER FOR BLESSING ON THE WORK OF THE DAY

O GOD, we thank Thee for the sweet refreshment of sleep and for the glory and vigor of the new day. As we set our faces once more toward our daily work, we pray Thee for the strength sufficient for our tasks. May Christ's spirit of duty and service ennoble all we do. Uphold us by the consciousness that our work is useful work and a blessing to all.

If there has been anything in our work harmful to others and dishonorable to ourselves, reveal it to our inner eye with such clearness that we shall hate it and put it away, though it be at a loss to ourselves. When we work with others, help us to regard them, not as servants to our will, but as brothers equal to us in human dignity and equally worthy of their full reward.

May there be nothing in this day's work of which we shall be ashamed when the sun has set, nor in the eventide of our life when our task is done and we go to our long home to meet Thy face. Amen.

Meditation: Our work should be the expression of our best self.

IT is possible to be idly busy, or at least to be busy to small purpose. The great temptation, probably of all executives, for example, is to allow the day to be filled with many small details, and not to hold themselves to

any solid large piece of work—to the work that shall call out their best and largest—to the work that is really laid upon them to do.

"In the reverence for work, divinely commissioned, one must not hesitate to refuse the 'devastator of a day.'"

Indeed, executives peculiarly need Hilty's advice: "Limit yourself to that which you really know and which has been specially committed to your care. One must not permit himself to be overburdened with superfluous tasks."

Plainly, only through work that is some real expression of our largest self can there come to us in full measure either character or happiness or influence. Carlyle seems to have all three in mind, and the law of expression upon which they so largely depend, when he urges so impatiently: "Produce! Produce! Were it but the pitifulest infinitesimal fraction of a product, produce it in God's name! 'Tis utmost thou hast in thee: out with it, then. Up! Up!"

No mere "truth-hunting," no speculation, no high emotions, no dreams, no raptures, no thrills, no beatific vision, no transcendental revelation of the divine, no tasting God, being drunk with God, absorption in God (as the old mystics variously put it) will avail anything, if they do not mean better character, shown in more active service.

H. C. King.

XX. FOR A RIGHT PLACE IN LIFE

GIVE me, O God, my true place and work on earth. Listen not to my vain wish that leans so quickly to presumption, but give according to Thine own wise thought and love.

Choose not too large a place, lest I be brought to shame before Thee. Give not too small a place, lest I fail in that full measure of service which is due. Choose Thou! and fit me to work which Thou shalt choose. Help me to have large ambitions of fidelity and a mind at peace in faith.

May I enjoy my work, knowing that strength and wisdom are of Thee and that Thou rejoicest in Thy child's joy. And may my life, spent in the way of Thine appointment, fit me for that place which Christ my Lord has gone to prepare. Amen.

Meditation: "Every man's life is a plan of God."

WE must start with the presumption that there is an intention, a purpose of God, in each of our lives. To presume this is only to accept in concrete form the saying of the philosophers that "God thinks in terms of life."

Doctor Bushnell entitled one of his most positive and searching sermons, "Every Man's Life a Plan of God"—a thought which he expanded to the proposition "that God has a definite life-plan for every human person, gird-

ing him, visibly or invisibly, for some exact thing which it will be the true significance and glory of his life to have accomplished."

How do we know, you ask, that such is the fact, if it be a fact? And if we do not know the fact, and just what it means, of what use is it to us? Let us start, I answer, with the presumption that there is an intention or purpose of God in the lives of men, and see if that presumption does not fit the best interpretation we can give to human life.

The fact that a man cannot see the purpose of God in his life is no proof that it does not exist. We can see abundant reason why it should not appear. We should become at once and continuously involved in the tyranny of detail. We should lose out of our lives the joy of discovery. We should cease to be free workers.

Not so does God enter into partnership with us. His sovereignty is adjusted to the fact that we are made in His image. Herein is the guarantee of our freedom, but herein also is the assurance that we have not been made in vain.

W. J. Tucker.

XXI. AN EVENING PRAYER FOR SELF-KNOWLEDGE

CLEAR in Thy sight, soul-searching God, we now place ourselves at the close of another day, that we may render our account of it to Thee; nay, rather that we may learn to see its hours as they lie before Thee, Who knoweth us better than we know ourselves.

We do but come to Thee at a few set times, going forth on the wings of the morning to meet Thy blessing, and returning to Thy shelter within the shades of night. But Thou abidest ever with us, as a silence behind the voices of the world, the truth within its illusions, and the shame secreted in its sins.

O that Thou wouldst purify our vision, that we may know even as we are known! O that Thou wouldst increase our faith, that we may no longer lean on our broken will, but throw ourselves freely open unto Thee, and simply watch Thy guiding light, and follow where Thou mayst lead! Amen.

Meditation: In self-examination seek to get a clear vision of yourself.

WHEN you are examining yourself, never call yourself merely a "sinner"; that is very cheap abuse, and utterly useless. You may even get to like it and be proud of it. But call yourself a liar, a coward, a sluggard, a

glutton, or an evil-eyed, jealous wretch, if you indeed find yourself to be in any wise any of these.

Take steady means to check yourself in whatever fault you have ascertained and justly accused yourself of. And as soon as you are in active way of mending, you will be no more inclined to moan over an undefined corruption.

For the rest, you will find it less easy to uproot faults than to choke them by gaining virtues. Do not think of your faults; still less of others' faults. In every person who comes near you, look for what is good and strong; honor that; rejoice in it; and, as you can, try to imitate it, and your faults will drop off, like dead leaves when their time comes.

If, on looking back, your whole life should seem rugged as a palm-tree stem, still, never mind, so long as it has been growing, and has its grand green shade of leaves, and weight of honeyed fruit, at top. And even if you cannot find much good in yourself at last, think that it does not much matter to the universe, either, what you were, or are; think how many people are noble, if you cannot be, and rejoice in their nobleness.

JOHN RUSKIN.

XXII. FOR FREEDOM AND HOPE

O THOU Source of holiness, health and beauty, open my eyes to the glory and the wonder of a life touched with mystic experience and filled with spiritual opportunity. Renouncing all faithless fears and vain regrets, may I live in the glad freedom of Thy children and do the work of the day in cheerfulness and hope. Whatever may be in store for me this day, whether it be joy or sadness, happiness or grief, grant me to learn the secret of Thy peace and to do Thy will. Amen.

Meditation: The morality of acquisition must be supplanted by the morality of sacrifice.

WE and our children must convert ourselves to a different conception of life. In place of the advantages of regular conduct, we must show them the dangers to be braved if they wish to be just; we must accustom them to the morality of the splendid risk in which they are taught that the just have much to suffer; we must make them understand the word of Christ which promises persecution to those who have left all to follow Him.

It is a heroic morality, the only one which is accountable for great upheavals, and the only one which liberates hearts, the only one which leads us through the valley of the shadow of death, where the outward man perishes, to a glorious end. We are all pledged to the most humili-

ating servitudes, all reduced to trembling for that which we are, which we have and possess, all slaves of fear and emptiness, until the day when we accomplish the substitution of the morality of acquisition, of possession, and of conservation, by that of active sacrifice wholly sanctioned by love. There we are rich in all that we have given, and possess nothing more really than that which we have willingly lost.

May all that which we have, and all that which we are, be transformed into love, as oil, in consuming itself, is transformed into light. Thus shall we enter upon the movement of liberation which brings forth life from death. And we shall be brothers and joint inheritors of Christ and of all the victorious vanquished who have healed us by their suffering, created light for us by their darkness, and by their crushing out have left bread for souls as the grain of wheat ground in the mill.

Man is a knight. All the gifts of life are conferred upon him that he may use them upon earth. Here is the helmet; here are the breastplate and the sword; here are the generous heart and the strong arm.

If he makes the intended use of it and hurls himself into battle without looking backward, then the helmet can roll to earth, the breastplate be shattered into a thousand pieces, the broken sword fall from his hands.

Do not lament; regret nothing; the goal is attained. The combatant can fall in peace, in saying with St. Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.

CHARLES WAGNER.

XXIII. A MORNING PRAYER FOR BELIEF IN THE BEAUTY AND WORK OF LIFE

THOU who art the fountain of life and light, whose coming forth to us is in the morning I would not have Thee come to find me sleeping, but be of those with whom is the timely inner wakefulness. Thou who turnest the shadow of death into the morning, make it morning in my heart—the morning of readiness to be divinely visited by whatever arrives, the morning of that inward having, the having of pure desire and pure intent, of faith and hope and charity, to which much is given that could not else be received.

Make me glad to be with the gladness that is strength, saying to myself that life is beautiful for all its glooms, and great for all its pettiness; that this which is new is good, yet is there better than this, and that this house of mine, large or narrow, handsome or mean, is the house of the Lord, wherein I may find Him who hides to be found.

Grant me to eat to my nourishing at Thy table spread in the wilderness, and to be feeding others the while with strengthening food by the life which I live in their midst, ministering ever the silent, subtle ministry of gracious ways and fine behavior. Amen.

Meditation: Every man can become a hero after the pattern of Christ.

WHAT is more striking in the life of Jesus than its perfect calm? It is this which carries with it so impressibly the suggestion of strength. When we think of the feelings within his breast, how tumultuous at times they must have been, the indignation at wrong-doing, the impatience with narrowness, the shock to his patriotism, the pain at his countrymen's ingratitude, the bitterness of failure, the wounding of his tenderest sensibilities, the disappointments over the weakness and slow comprehension of his disciples, and finally the physical suffering—how wonderful is the even, unbroken calmness of his life!

Through it all perfect self-possession, a heart and mind at peace, no trace of discord in the inner life, no bewilderment or wonder at the strangeness of his lot, no complaint, no impatience—just a calm, self-collected, God-centered strength. We shall always have to go back to the life of Jesus, not to find a model to copy, but an ideal of Christian character, which shows us what man may become.

It is this God-centered strength that forms the chief element of Christian character. You may call it by many different names—the liberty of the Christian, independence, the dominion over the world, or simply faith—it is that quality which has translated itself into our modern vocabulary in the use of the word character.

L. H. Schwab.

XXIV. A MORNING PRAYER FOR PURITY AND LOVE

GRANT, Almighty God, that we may this day endeavor to be that which Thou wouldst have us to be, and to do that which Thou commandest, listening to the voice of Thy Spirit within us, not leaving one fault unrepented of, one spot in our hearts uncleansed, and sparing least of all that sin with which it costeth us most to part; not looking back, but forward, not casting down our eyes to earth, but lifting them up to heaven, not leaning upon mortal man, but upon Thee, the Rock of Ages, who standeth fast forever, loving all men, doing good unto all men, loving Thee, and never doubting that Thou lovest us, and wilt make all things work together for good to those who trust in Thee, our Lord, our Father, and our God. Amen.

Meditation: God is the only true motive of conduct.

IT makes a great difference whether we live a righteous life out of a sense of this world or out of a sense of the eternal world, because the laws require it or because God requires it—that is, whether we act from the greater or the lesser motive.

It is the motive that gives tone and force to character. Conduct is secondary; motive is first. God is the only true motive for human conduct. The sublimest lines in

English poetry perhaps are those translated by Doctor Johnson from Boëthius:

> From Thee, great God, we spring; to Thee we tend;
> Path, Motive, Guide, Original, and End.

God, the way, the motive, the guide, the beginning and end of all conduct—this is what is meant. Do you ask why it is necessary to take God into account, why it is not the same if we do right from any motive whatever? I answer it is all-important to get into the order and relation where we belong, the eternal and abiding order of God where right is right, because it is God's nature and because it is the secret and method of the universe. Thus righteousness becomes supremely imperative; there is the whole universe behind it as a motive; it lays hold of our inmost nature and binds us to duty by every law of our being.

It is one thing to live in right relations to our neighbors because society and custom require it; it is another thing, not contrary, but greater, to do right because we thus put ourselves in accord with God and His eternal laws. By acting from such a motive we rise into the heights of our being and vindicate our nature as having its origin in God.

T. T. Munger.

XXV. AN EVENING PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Dear God, another day is done,
And I have seen the golden sun
Swing in the arch from east to west
And sink behind the pines to rest.
I thank Thee that Thou gavest me
The power of sight, that I may see
The tinted glories of Thy skies,
An earthly glimpse of Paradise:
The power to hear the evening breeze
Swelling in organ harmonies:
The power to feel the tender grasp
Of loving hands in friendship's clasp:
I thank Thee for these gifts to me,
But one thing more I ask of Thee:
From out Thy bounteous, gracious hand
Give me the power to understand,
To understand—to sympathize—
To note the pain in others' eyes;
To have the power to rightly read
The kindly motive of each deed.
And this I humbly ask of Thee
Because I know Thou lovest me. Amen.

Meditation: True life consists alone in love.

ONLY he who loves lives.

Love is, according to Christ's teaching, life itself, not irrational, suffering, perishable, but blessed and infinite life. And we all know it.

Love is not a deduction of reason, not the consequence of a certain activity; it is the most joyous activity of life, which surrounds us on all sides, and which we all know in ourselves from the very first recollections of childhood until the false teachings of the world have muddled it in our soul and have deprived us of the possibility of experiencing it. Love is not a bias for what increases the temporal good of man's personality, as the love for chosen persons or objects, but that stirring after the good of what is outside of man, which remains in man after the renunciation of the good of the animal personality.

Who of living men does not know that blessed feeling which is experienced at least once, most frequently only in earliest childhood, when the soul is not yet muddled by that lie which drowns life in us—that blessed feeling of meekness of spirit when one wants to love all—relatives, father, mother, brothers, and evil men, and enemies, and the dog, and the horse, and the grass; one wishes only this much—that all should be happy and comfortable—and one wishes still more that one may be the cause of the happiness of all and may give one's whole life for the purpose of making all happy and comfortable forever. This alone is that love in which man's life consists.

LEO TOLSTOI.

XXVI. FOR THE JOY OF RECONCILIATION, LIBERTY, AND SYMPATHY

O GOD, ~~Father of all men,~~ graciously give unto me the joy of perfect reconciliation with Thy will. May every disorderly power in my soul be subdued to willing obedience. Create in me the music of harmonious fellowships, so that all my powers may be as a united orchestra to praise and bless Thy holy name. And mercifully give unto me the joy of spiritual liberty.

Let Thy statutes become my songs. Take the reluctance out of my obedience. Let me not be in Thy house in the spirit of a bond-slave, but rather in the spirit of a son, finding springs of comfort in Thy presence and esteeming Thy desire as my delight.

O God, give unto me the holy joy of human sympathy.

Recreate the chords that have become insensitive to my brother's joys and griefs. If the harp is broken, graciously remake it out of the fullness of Thy love. Amen.

Meditation: Christ does not trust Himself to a divided heart.

THE more clearly we follow Christ the more perseveringly do certain truths present themselves to us—truths with which we commune, but dare not, for a while, receive

in their full import, because we know they would lead us whither we would not. Yet they come again and again, offering themselves to us, like the sibyl of old, each time under harder conditions, till at last we accept them on their own terms.

A Christian may love his Master truly, and be yet unprepared to follow Him whithersoever He goeth. How can two walk in a way unless they be agreed? And the enmity between Christ and nature is not yet so wholly slain but that there may be on the Christian's part conscious shrinkings and reservations; he knows that it would be hard to take this thing up; hard, perhaps impossible, to let this thing go, even at the command of Christ Himself.

This crisis of spiritual life, full of pain and perplexity, is one with which our Saviour may deeply sympathize, for He knoweth what is in man; yet it is none the less a temper which "is not worthy of Him."

He does not trust Himself to a divided heart, and of this the owner of such a heart is well aware. So that there arises within it a secret craving for whatever may detach and loosen these bonds, from which no effort of its own can free it—a desire like that which St. Paul so fervently expresses for the fellowship of his Lord's sufferings, the conformity to his Lord's death, so that by any means it may attain to spiritual resurrection with Him.

There comes a moment in which the soul, awaking to the sense of the deep antagonism between grace and nature, will exclaim, as seeing no other way of deliverance, "Let us go unto Him, that we may also die with Him."

AUTHOR OF "PATIENCE OF HOPE."

XXVII. FOR SPIRITUAL STRENGTH

THIS is my prayer to Thee, my Lord—strike, strike at the root of penury in my heart.

Give me the strength lightly to bear my joys and sorrows.

Give me the strength to make my love fruitful in service.

Give me the strength never to disown the poor, or bend my knees before insolent might.

Give me the strength to raise my mind high above daily trifles.

And give me the strength to surrender my strength to Thy will with love. Amen.

Meditation: Our duties, not our rights, have the first place.

THERE is a morbid feeling, very frequently met with, which disguises from itself that it is selfishness, by trying to lay claim to extra sensitiveness and demanding special consideration from all who come in contact with it.

This is one of the commonest forms of discontent and unhappiness; it is one of the most ordinary complaints of the moral invalid that he is misunderstood, that he is not appreciated as he ought to be, that he does not receive the affection he requires; you know the long string of excuses that we all of us are tempted to give when we do not wish to be judged by the rules which we apply to all others.

CHURCH DIVINITY SCHOOL OF THE PACIFIC

We must be content to be misunderstood in the sense that we all know our own virtues better than any one else, that we often speak unadvisedly and carelessly with our tongue, and have not the strength to take the consequences. It may be we are not appreciated, or loved as we would wish or as we think we ought to be, but if we were to become of more value we should certainly be more appreciated, and if we were more amiable we should be more loved.

In moral questions, as in political questions, the whole issue turns on whether we commence from our rights or our duties: to take up an easy attitude toward life and demand that every one should do his duty toward us, while we gracefully waive the question of how far we are doing our duty toward him, is one of the most ordinary forms of selfishness nourished by a distorted sense of justice.

Let us begin from ourselves in the first instance, and the result will be quite different; let us consider whether we do all we can for others, and let us not try to wring out of them the uttermost farthing; nay, let us keep no creditor account at all against them.

MANDELL CREIGHTON.

XXVIII. A PRAYER OF DESIRE

O GOD, Who hast filled us with yearnings of an infinite desire, longings insatiable, groanings that cannot be uttered: Who providest for us here beauty and joy beset with pangs, that our eyes and ears may fail after that which they have not seen or heard, and our heart sicken with hope deferred while we conceive not that which we wait for: O God, Whom, not having seen, we love, and know for that which, not knowing, we desire, bring us home to Thee, each of us, all of us, from any height or depth, at any time, with or without anything or all things; only bring us, ourselves, our very selves, all ourselves, to Thine own Presence which is our home; bring us home one with another, all home to Thee. By Him who is our Way and our Door, Thy Son our only hope, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Meditation: No compromise in the affairs of the spirit.

GOD is the embodiment of all our ideals. It is He who gives them reality and substance. Without Him we never could feel them to be anything more than the product of fancy. Just because He is the substance of our ideals there is no rest and no peace till we surrender to Him, for in yielding to our best self we are realizing the ideal manhood or ideal womanhood to which our creation pledges us.

It is here that we touch upon the secret of the ineffectiveness of so many lives. They are the result of a weak and futile compromise. In the political and social spheres compromise is a necessity and even a virtue; in the spiritual realm it spells disaster, for it means division, lack of unity of aim and purpose.

Those who compromise are not at one with themselves; their life is in a state of conflict—and this means a state of weakness and inefficiency.

There is hope, glorious and abundant hope, for the man who commits himself unreservedly to the ideal; there is even hope for the man who gives himself absolutely to evil, because he will discover in due season that the universe is not so made that evil in the long run can triumph.

He will learn that in suppressing the admonitions of his better self, and in confining his life within the limits of the purely natural, he is trying to do the impossible, to follow a way of life which implies a fundamental spiritual contradiction.

But what hope is there for the man who shilly-shallies between good and evil, who now ranges himself on the side of the spirit, and now on the side of its relentless enemies? There is no hope for such a man in the world, or, so far as one can see, in any other world.

It is a deep truth of experience that with God it is all or nothing. When we give Him all, He returns our all back to us, only with a new fullness of meaning and with new and higher ambitions to be realized.

SAMUEL MCCOMB.

XXIX. FOR FAITHFULNESS IN WORK AND TRIAL

O THOU Who art, and art to be. There are no seasons unto Thee. But unto us Thou hast appointed a set time upon the earth, and the shadow on our dial lengthens out. Our moments of faithful duty follow us from the past and do not perish; our wasted hours we cannot gather up and they are clean gone forever. Hasten us, even with Thy chastisements, O Thou great Taskmaster, and say unto us, "Fulfil ye your works ere the sun goeth down."

Remind us of Thy servant Jesus, who in fewest days finished Thy divinest work; and fill us with His spirit of holy alacrity. In the loneliness of temptation, may we be steadfast through all the faintness of soul, and stand in awe and sin not. In the retreat of anguish, may we still say, "The cup which My Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" and rise up to bear our cross with patience.

Amid the vain shows of the world may we never be bewildered or dismayed, remembering that the souls of the righteous are in Thy hands, and there shall no evil touch them. Amen.

Meditation: The best man is the truest man.

"CHRIST is the perfect man," we say. When we say that we ought to mean Christ is the only absolutely true man that has ever lived; that all men, just as far as they fall short of Christ, fall short of humanity; that not that Jesus should be sinless, but that every other human being who ever lived should be a sinner, is the real moral wonder of the world.

Here, and here only, can come the real meaning of the sinfulness of sin. Let me go about always saying to myself, "To err is human!" and what chance is there that I, being conscious of and rejoicing in my humanity, should think it terrible to do what I believe no man can be human without doing?

Somebody meets me and says, "Christ!" "Ah yes!" I answer; "but then, you know, He was a peculiar sort of man. He was not just man like us! We cannot think that we can be what He was. That would be to degrade His divinity and to depreciate His work."

So we talk with a false show of reverence, when really just the opposite is true. Really we disown and misinterpret Christ when we refuse to see in Him the true type of man, on seeing which no man has a right to be satisfied or rest until he comes to be like Him.

The best man is the truest man. It is in our best moments, not in our worst moments, that we are most genuinely ourselves. Oh, believe in your noblest impulses, in your purest instincts, in your most unworldly and spiritual thoughts! PHILLIPS BROOKS.

XXX. FOR SINCERITY IN THE WORK OF LIFE

GIVE me, O Lord, a real love for the day's work, but deliver me from its bondage after the hours of toil are over. May I find it a joy to do the little tedious things that make up the monotony of the house or shop because they are part of the King's housework. And when the day is done, may it leave me, not with tangled nerves and jarring thoughts, but with the consciousness of having done my best and pleased Thee well!

Lord, help me to live the sincere life! Give to me that thought and thorough honesty which gathers a moral reserve against sudden strains! Keep me from trifling living and careless thinking and frivolous talking, that when the winds blow and the tempests rage, I may find myself untroubled and unafraid, because I have found reality in the Rock of Ages. Amen.

Meditation: The higher righteousness exceeds all legal requirements inasmuch as it is motived by love.

THE most searching words of the psalmists and prophets never penetrated so far into the hidden impulses and motives of the heart as did the words of Jesus, while His example, held up before His followers as the rule of their life, formed a more exacting standard, and called

for a more entire forgetfulness of self, than any previous seer or lawgiver had dared to demand. He came to liberate men from the heavy burdens which the Jewish legalists had laid upon their shoulders, and yet the righteousness which He demanded was not less, but more thorough and exigent than theirs.

"For I say unto you, except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven."

This sentence from the Sermon on the Mount expresses the same truth as Paul worked out in his own intense experience—that true righteousness is something deeper and more penetrating than the fulfilment of the most arduous round of legal or ceremonial observance, that it requires an altogether different attitude of the will and a change in the whole method of moral life.

Thus the demand of Jesus was not for outward conformity to a precisely defined and limited standard, but for a thorough inward cleansing of a man's whole nature, and the sacrifice of all merely personal aims in order that he might be able to share the aims and the work of Jesus Himself.

The Christian's duty is not to be measured in the set terms of a legal code, but shares the infinitude of the world's need and the opportunities for service which spring from it.

C. F. Barbour.

XXXI. FOR JOY

O GOD, Author of the world's joy, Bearer of the world's pain, make us glad that we are men and that we have inherited the world's burden; deliver us from the luxury of cheap melancholy; and, at the heart of all our trouble and sorrow, let unconquerable gladness dwell; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Meditation: Joy is the key-note of true religion.

THE great wave of asceticism which swept over Christendom at an early period completely submerged in many quarters the rightful joyousness of Christian life. Even at the present day almost every section of the Church is in some degree infected with the ascetic spirit, creating, especially among the young, an impression that religion is essentially a joyless mode of existence. Outside of ecclesiastical organizations also there are men like Carlyle, who make it the very glory of Christianity that it is a "worship of sorrow."

Now it may be admitted that Christianity, by its whole system of thought, recognizes with peculiar clearness the value of sorrow as a discipline of life, though this aspect of its teaching may be unduly magnified by ignoring the numerous recognitions of the same truth by moralists outside of Christendom, even among the Greeks. But apart from that, it would involve a complete misappre-

hension of the Christian spirit to represent it as implying an exclusive worship of sorrow or even a depreciation of joy as a factor of moral life.

For it is a familiar truth that the best work in every sphere of life is done under the inspiration of joy rather than of pain. All painful consciousness is indicative of some morbid process, and work that is stimulated by such a process must, almost inevitably, partake of its morbid character. The most efficient worker is the man who takes pleasure in his work, who has ceased to feel it a painful task. There is no reason for supposing that this law does not hold in moral life. The finest morality is not that which is regulated by a cool, passionless prudence. It is rather that which thrills with glad enthusiasm in the loving service of God and man.

J. C. Murray.

XXXII. FOR FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD AND WITH MAN

O GOD, Thou great Companion of our hearts, our fairest vision of mercy and truth, of love and justice, we commune with Thee in all our ways of life.

In Thy presence, as from a noble height, we behold the far-stretching vistas of our days; great things become great and small things small. In the warmth of great love our hearts open to wisdom and beauty and move with kindness and patient sympathy. Our wills are strengthened toward goodness and against evil. Our joy is multiplied in every earnest task and in all good pleasures.

With Thee we would be co-workers to redeem the waste places within and without. Renew our faith in the gracious kingdom of love and righteousness and may we have the will of Christ to labor for its coming in all the world. Amen.

Meditation: Prayer acts on character and character reacts on prayer.

IT is the prayer of the righteous man which availeth much, and here there seems to be a circle; for prayer has been presented as a means for the attainment of character, and now character is required as a condition of efficacious prayer. And it is one of those logical circles

which must be accepted, but only as a circle which ever expands. It means that prayer must be sincere. It must express the truest and highest nature one possesses, and it must also sincerely undertake the realization in ordinary life of the elevation and strength gained in the moment of devotion.

Character and prayer are never twice the same. They grow. Each helps the other. The good man gets a new outlook, new ideals, when he prays, and thus becomes better than he was; while the prayerful man tries to put his prayers into practice and from every test he discovers the necessity of other prayers and learns better how to pray. The righteous man is the earnest man, who does the best he knows and continually seeks fuller knowledge.

It is doubtless with God much as it is with men in heeding and answering petitions. Men desire to know what kind of a heart and will are back of the requests which come to them. An honest, industrious soul gets a good response; and then if he uses well what he gets, he increases his credit. It is reverent to believe the same of God and of the moral order of the world.

Edward S. Ames.

XXXIII. FOR GRACE TO PROFIT BY A THORN IN THE FLESH

TO each child of Thine, as the price of the sensitiveness that feels Thy leading, or the effectiveness that does Thy will, Thou givest some thorn to prick the surface of pride.

Help me to extract from mine its lesson of humility. If it unfits me for the large sphere I should choose, surely Thou hast some modest place for me to fill, some humble task for me to do, with which my defects, my misfortunes, my blunders, even my repented sins, cannot wholly interfere. Help me to take it cheerfully, leaving to others the larger service I forego.

Grant that my own secret sorrow, my own keen disappointment, may make me sympathetic to discover, tactful to treat, the suffering that lies, hidden or exposed, in every human heart.

Thus even through sorrow, merited or unmerited, may I be drawn closer to Thee, closer to the suffering Christ, closer to my needy fellow-men. Through a deeper tenderness, a profounder humility, a broader charity, a gentler helpfulness, may I find the heightened joy of the devoted spirit abundant compensation for the sufferings of the outward man. Amen.

Meditation: True prayer seeks to bend man's will to God's will.

SIR OLIVER LODGE reduces the outstanding controversy between science and faith to the question of the efficacy of prayer. "Is prayer to hypothetical and supersensuous beings as senseless and useless as it is unscientific? Or does prayer pierce through the husk and apparently sensuous covering of the universe and reach something living, loving, and helpful beyond?"

Admitting fully the inflexibility of natural law, it is a very inadequate reason for ceasing to pray and is really based upon a low conception of religion.

The highest religion, however, sees in everything that happens the expression of the will of God, and while accepting the whole discipline of life as the education of a loving Father, aims at bending man's will to God's and not God's will to the ofttimes blind and misguided desires of man. It does not conceive that there is any *a priori* necessity attaching to natural law, or that it has any independent and coercive power; for an analysis of the idea of law will show that it has no meaning except as the expression of will.

The universe then is governed by the Divine Will. It conceives rather that history and experience show that this will energizes according to regular modes or methods, which we have agreed to call the laws of nature.

But what if there should be a law of prayer amid the mysteries of the universe?

FROM "RELIGION AND MEDICINE."

XXXIV. FOR CONSECRATION OF THE UNCONSCIOUS LIFE

O LORD, I have a busy world around me; eye, ear, and thought will be needed for all my work to be done in that busy world. Now, ere I enter upon it, I would commit eye, ear, and thought to Thee!

Do Thou bless them and keep their work Thine, such as, through Thy natural laws, my heart beats and my blood flows without any thought of mine for them, so my spiritual life may hold on its course at those times when my mind cannot consciously turn to Thee to commit each particular thought to Thy service.

Hear my prayer for my dear Redeemer's sake. Amen.

Meditation: By obedience to these rules we can form any habit we desire.

THE *rules* of habit are simple, and on these psychologists are practically agreed.

1. Make the start gradually, but with a *strong initiative.* Cross the Rubicon boldly, and burn the bridge behind you.

2. All the more, if you are emerging from a bad into a good habit, commit yourself *with the whole force of your will and the full flood of your emotion* to the new course. For reaction will come; and your resolution will require

the whole benefit of this self-commitment to prevent your turning back.

3. Remember the value of self-mastery, and *accustom yourself to daily discipline* in the good habit. In these days, when nearly all ethical exhortations are anti-ascetic, let us not forget the value that lies in self-denial.

4. *Begin at the earliest possible moment*, and try, if possible, never to be guilty of a *single lapse*. Remember that a single defeat gives the enemy a strong vantage-ground, and also breaks in upon the moral tradition which you have been creating for yourself.

5. Put yourself *in the best possible environment*. A drunkard forming habits of temperance should live among those who wholly abstain from that which has proved the cause of his terrible weakness. If injurious surroundings cannot be changed, the effort of resistance will be greatly increased. "Nothing exerts so great an influence on the psychical organism as the moral atmosphere breathed by it."

W. S. Bruce.

XXXV. FOR A SPIRIT OF HELPFULNESS

ONCE more a new day lies before us, our Father. As we go out among men to do our work, touching the hands and lives of our fellows, make us, we pray Thee, friends of all the world. Save us from blighting the fresh flower of any heart by the flare of sudden anger or secret hate. May we not bruise the rightful self-respect of any by contempt or malice.

Help us to cheer the suffering by our sympathy, to freshen the drooping by our hopefulness, and to strengthen in all the wholesome sense of worth and the joy of life. Save us from the deadly poison of class pride. Grant that we may look all men in the face with the eyes of a brother. If any one needs us, make us ready to yield our help ungrudgingly, unless higher duties claim us, and may we rejoice that we have it in us to be helpful to our fellow-men. Amen.

Meditation: We ought to help all who need our help.

SEEING that it is our opportunity to uphold all that fall and to raise up those that be bowed down, to assist all that are in danger, necessity and tribulation, let us call to mind those persons whom we ought to succor:

The lonely and sad-hearted.

The forsaken and forgotten.

All sick persons in pain, weariness, and anxiety.

All who have defective or perverted minds.

The ill-born and the ill-trained, who have had a childhood without joy and a youth without discipline.

All who are addicted to frivolity and vanity, to empty speech and silly thoughts.

All whose temper is rough in the grain and who spoil the happiness of the home by unwitting harshness.

Those who are morbid about their own sufferings or sin, who sit down and mourn instead of standing up and doing right.

All who are dejected because they cannot reach the destiny they long for and cannot finish the work they began.

Those who are troubled with conflicting tides of thought, and who feel the weight of unintelligible things.

All who are separated from their friends by beliefs which they must not dissemble.

All who have been bereaved of relatives and friends, or are troubled by the suffering or sin of those they love.

All who are tried by passionate temptations, or cold ambitions, or mean suggestions.

To all these we offer ourselves, that we may be strength to the weak, comfort to the sorrowful, eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, refuge to the fearful, and saviors to the sinful.

H. Youlden.

XXXVI. A PENITENTIAL PRAYER

OUR Father, we look back on the years that are gone, and shame and sorrow come upon us, for the harm we have done to others rises up in our memory to accuse us. Some we have seared with the fire of our lust, and some we have scorched by the heat of our anger. In some we helped to quench the glow of young ideals by our selfish pride and craft, and in some we have nipped the opening bloom of faith by the frost of our unbelief.

We might have followed Thy blessed footsteps, O Christ, binding up the bruised hearts of our brothers and guiding the wayward passions of the young to firmer manhood. Instead, there are poor hearts now broken and darkened because they encountered us on the way, and some perhaps remember us only as the beginning of their misery or sin.

O God, we know that all our prayers can never bring back the past, and no tears can wash out the red marks with which we have scarred some life that stands before our memory with accusing eyes. Grant that at last a humble and pure life may grow out of our late contrition, that in the brief days still left to us we may comfort and heal where we have scorned and crushed. . . . Grant this boon, that so the face of Thy Christ may smile upon us and the light within us may shine undimmed. Amen.

Meditation: The new life makes atonement to the social order.

THE new character—the putting on of Christ, to use Paul's realistic phrase—is developed, not in solitude, but amid the stress and strain of a world where evil, greed, cruelty, and injustice abound and are intrenched behind ancient customs and institutions, where men and women are the victims of organic and corporate corruption.

The new man is in a state of chronic revolt against his sinful environment; hence he is pledged to the cause of social righteousness.

The new man is pledged by his vision of Christ to the cause of social reform. All the great mystics were the social regenerators of their time, and today much of the fussiness and shallowness of social effort rises from the absence of the mystical motive.

The new man is constrained to undertake some form of social service because of the nature of the new life that is welling up within him. In him God now lives and energizes through him in a way in which he did not live or energize before. But God's life is an atoning life. He bears vicariously the sins and sufferings, the wrongs and shames, of the world. "In all their affliction He is afflicted." And as He bears them He is working mightily to abolish them.

SAMUEL MCCOMB.

XXXVII. FOR SELF-SURRENDER TO GOD

I WOULD rest in Thee, O Lord, and be at peace. I would forget my disappointed hopes, my fruitless efforts, all the vain struggles of a divided mind, and in Thy great love I would find myself, no longer weak and broken, but strong with a new hope, eager to follow where Thou may'st lead.

Enter Thou into my heart and there manifest Thy healing power.

Transform into Thy likeness every thought and purpose. Perfect Thy strength in my weakness; glorify Thy grace in my unworthiness, that through me Thy abundant life may overflow to other souls. So draw my inmost self to Thee, that I shall be redeemed from every evil way, that in the shining of Thy beauty all the lesser lures of the world shall cease to charm. Abide Thou within me as a spirit of quiet strength and gladness, of insight and of peace, and then shall duty become a joy, and life a thing to be desired; then shall every failure be redeemed, and all my doing shall be pure.

O quickening Love, let Thy will be done, let Thy Kingdom come in me. Amen.

Meditation: Evil is overcome not by attacking it, but by setting our minds on virtue.

TO pray *against* certain sins to which we have rendered ourselves liable is to strengthen them; and that for the reason that prayer against them is directing attention

to them; and to direct our attention to them is to find ourselves once more enjoying them, and that is more than half the victory for the sin. This explains why some men sin in spite of their prayers.

Delacroix, in describing the life of St. Teresa, says: "This state of division and war kept her tendencies in check, but also kept them alive by the very effort she directed against them." The continual struggle against sin keeps it active. Men fight their iniquities and their temptations hand to hand, and the more they do so the stronger the iniquities or the temptations grow. The Gospel remedy and the psychological is to turn to God. In truth, the only effective inhibition of any inward evil is to turn the attention not on the evil we mean to flee, but on the life we mean to attain. "Forgetting the things which are behind, we press towards the mark of our high calling." And we forget, not by trying to forget, but by setting our mind on the goal. We do not first die to sin in order that we may thereafter live to God; we live to God, and so die to sin.

In my boyhood I was taken to see a famous quarry. Over what appeared to me a great gulf had been made a pathway one plank broad for wheelbarrows, and over that perilous path quarrymen were wheeling loads of earth. I asked how the thing was possible, and the quarryman explained that he was able to wheel the barrow without stumbling by fixing his eye on the further goal. It was his concentrated attention on that that kept him safe.

GEORGE STEVEN.

XXXVIII. FOR THE LOVE OF FRIENDS

O LORD OF LOVE, in Whom alone I live, kindle in my soul Thy fire of love; give me to lay myself aside, and to think of others as I kneel to Thee.

For those whom Thou hast given me, dear to me as my own soul, Thy best gift on earth, I ask Thy blessing.

If they are now far away, so that I cannot say loving words to them today, yet be Thou near them, give them of Thy joy, order their ways, keep them from sickness, from sorrow and from sin, and let all things bring them closer to Thee.

If they are near me, give us wisdom and grace to be true helpers of one another, serving in love's service all day long.

Let nothing come between us to cloud our perfect trust, but help each to love more truly, more steadfastly, more unselfishly.

And not only for those I love, but for others: for all who are lonely, or weary, or sad; for all who are turning away from the light; for all who have forgotten Thee, I pray. Lord, have pity on them.

Keep me from all the hard and bitter thoughts that I like too well, from envy and jealousy and pride, and give me the mind of Christ to rejoice in the lowest place where loving souls may serve. Amen.

Meditation: Pride is a denial of the soul's greatest good.

IF we could trace back to its psychological genesis the pride in the haughty man or the heartless woman, we should find that it sprang from nothing worse than this childish impulse to shield one's self; and that only gradually had this impulse of self-shielding grown into its odious and hideous counterpart of ignoring, slighting, and hurting others.

When full-blown, however, pride is one of the most deadly sins. It is the very antithesis of that love which is God's will for us, and our own true good. Love looks kindly and sympathetically on all: sees others and ourselves in true proportions and relations; recognizes how small and imperfect a part of the whole the individual, even at his best, must be; and gladly confesses that there is none good but one, that is, God.

Pride, on the contrary, is puffed up; behaves itself unseemly, is easily provoked, thinketh all manner of evil, rejoiceth in other people's iniquity. It is the denial, the drying up within one, of the very principle of love. In his cruel cutting of others off from himself, the proud man cuts himself off from God.

Pride is as lifeless as it is loveless.

W. De Witt Hyde.

XXXIX. FOR THE VISION OF CHRIST IN ALL SOULS

Christ of Judea, look Thou in my heart.
Do I not love Thee, look to Thee, in Thee
Alone have faith of all the sons of men—
Faith deepening with the weight and woe of years?
Pure soul and tenderest of all that came
Into this world of sorrow, hear my prayer.
Lead me, yea, lead me deeper into life,
This suffering, human life wherein Thou liv'st
And breathest still, and hold'st Thy way Divine.
'Tis here, O pitying Christ, where Thee I seek,
Here where the strife is fiercest; where the sun
Beats down upon the highway thronged with men,
And in the raging mart. Oh! deeper lead
My soul into the living world of souls
Where Thou dost move.

But lead me, Man Divine,
Where'er Thou will'st, only that I may find
At the long journey's end Thy image there,
And grow more like it! For art not Thou
The human shadow of the Infinite Love,
That made and fills the endless universe,
The very Word of Him, the Unseen, Unknown
Eternal Good that rules the summer flower
And all the worlds that people starry space!

Amen.

Meditation: What makes a man a Christian?

IT is well known what place is given in Scripture to faith, hope, and love. What are these? They are three feelings; and they are the three master-feelings—the tap-roots among the innumerable roots and rootlets of feeling in our nature. These tap-roots must be sunk somewhere, and the soil in which they are embedded will determine the character of the man. When they are rooted in Christ, the man is a Christian.

There are few reflections more pathetic than that in our nature there may be lying possibilities unused and faculties undeveloped which might be copious sources of both happiness and usefulness. Perhaps, indeed, there may be in all possibilities which, in this life at least, are providentially prevented from developing naturally and fully; but it is sad when these possibilities remain unrealized, through our own fault.

No man can be a man in the fullest sense of the word if his nature be shut against the influence of the things that are above; in that case, there are possibilities of expansion and excellence lying in him waste and barren; and these are the noblest possibilities of all.

No woman can attain to perfect womanliness unless her heart has opened to the softening and refining influence of the love of Christ. We may miss many things in this world and yet not have lived in vain, but the secret and the glory of life are missed altogether if the gateways which admit the influence of the Eternal have never been opened.

JAMES STALKER.

XL. FOR VICTORY IN THE BATTLE OF LIFE

MASTER of all things, Lord of all, Who hast so ordered it that life from the beginning shall be a struggle throughout the course, and even to the end, so guide and order that struggle within us that at last what is good in us may conquer and all evil be overcome, that all things may be brought into harmony and God may be all in all.

So do Thou guide and govern us, that every day, whatsoever betide us, some gain to better things, some more blessed joy in higher things may be ours, that so we, though but weaklings, may yet, God-guided, go from strength to strength, until at last, delivered from that burden of the flesh through which comes so much struggling, we may enter into the land of harmony and of eternal peace. Hear us, of Thy mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Meditation: Every man is called to be a soldier in the spiritual order.

THE soldier's life is the figure under which St. Paul represents that other warfare which the servant of Christ is ever carrying on against himself and against the world. "Take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand."

We speak of the Church militant here on earth against various forms of evil; there is a battle going on between the spirit and the flesh, between knowledge and ignorance, between the higher and the lower principles of human nature, and we imagine to ourselves allies fighting on either side, and that in this battle God and the angels are spectators. And we sometimes contrast the disorder of this world with the peace and order of another.

"Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Yet we know also how greatly all Churches have fallen short of their mission; how they have often made a compromise with the world, instead of resisting its evils; and how in our own lives there is comparatively little of struggle and effort, but a falling in with the world, and acquiescence in the customs and opinions of men.

A life such as that which I have just been describing awakens us to a sense of the unreality of our own lives. For no man can be at peace with himself who has not also been at war with himself at some time or other; and there is a victory which a man wins over himself when he has subjugated his passions to the purposes of God in the government of the world, when he has fought against the sins and prejudices which so easily beset us, when he has learned to live not to himself, but to God—this is what the Scripture calls the good soldier of Jesus Christ.

Benjamin Jowett.

XLI. A MORNING PRAYER FOR ENCOURAGEMENT

O GOD, my heavenly Father, I, Thy child, come now to Thy feet with my supplications. I cannot live without Thy blessing. Life is too hard for me, duty is too large. I get discouraged, and my feeble hands hang down. I come to Thee with my weakness, asking Thee for strength. Help me always to be of good cheer. Let me not be disheartened by difficulties. Let me never doubt Thy love or any of Thy promises.

Give me grace to be an encourager to others, never a discourager. Let me not go about with sadness or fear among men, but may I be a benediction to every one I meet, always making life easier, never harder, for those who come within my influence.

Help me to be as a Christ to others, that they may see something of His love in my life and learn to love Him in me. I beseech Thee to hear me, to receive my prayer, and forgive my sins; for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Meditation: Every vision implies a task.

YOU have been pondering and studying. Somehow it has become clear to you, let us say, that there is a God. The supernatural behind the natural, the will behind all forces, has revealed itself to you.

For the moment, it is enough for you just to know that mighty truth. Turning it this way and that, you think in one view and another how mighty it is. But very soon, if you are a true seeker, your nature begins to feel and hear a stir upon the other side of it. Under the windows which look toward the world, the tumult of the needy life of your fellow-men comes rising up to you.

Perhaps it is more definite than that and certain special fellow-men come, with footsteps which you can hear, up to your heart's doors and knock. At first their coming seems to be only an intrusion. Why can they not leave you alone with your great idea? But by and by you see more vividly. You begin to wonder whether their coming on this side of you is not the true correlative and correspondent of the coming of the vision on he other side of you. You begin to feel that the practical life may be needed to complete the meditative life. If you open the door to your intrusive fellow-men you find that it indeed is so. Your idea of God falling upon the many mirrors of their various needs and natures gains new interpretations and illuminations.

Their human hearts get hold of the reality of God, which they never could have found out for themselves, through your belief in it. And your own life open on both sides, on this side to the vision, and on that side to the men, grows rich and sacred as being the room in which that most deep and interesting transaction which the world can witness, the meeting of truth with the human mind, takes place.

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

XLII. AN EVENING PRAYER FOR DIVINE HELP AND BLESSING

WE beseech Thee, Lord, to behold us with favor, weak men and women subsisting under the covert of Thy patience.

Be patient still; suffer us yet awhile longer—with our broken purposes of good, with our idle endeavors against evil—suffer us awhile longer to endure and (if it may be) help us to do better. Bless to us our extraordinary mercies; if the day come when these must be taken, brace us to play the man under affliction.

Go with each of us to rest; if any wake, temper to them the dark hours of watching; and when the day returns, return to us, our sun and comforter, and call us up with morning faces and with morning hearts—eager to labor—eager to be happy, if happiness shall be our portion—and, if the day be marked for sorrow, strong to endure it. Amen.

Meditation: The main object of religion is not to get a man into heaven, but to get heaven into him.

IT is well at night before we sleep to examine ourselves: Have we endeavored to keep our body in health? Have we restrained our appetites and passions? Have we resisted any temptation? Have we committed any sin? Have we wronged any one? Have we done any one any

harm? Have we done any one any good? Have we done our best?

"The peace of God, which passeth all understanding," is held out to us as, and certainly is, one of the greatest and most inestimable blessings we can any of us hope to attain. "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him."

In times of sorrow and anxiety it is the best and greatest consolation. The main object of religion is not to get a man into heaven, but to get heaven into him. This is impossible if we allow the mind to dwell on evil thoughts.

Most sins are committed in thought before they are translated into act. Those who let their thoughts dwell on evil are only too likely to let their actions follow their thoughts; and those who keep their minds on what is pure and good are least likely to do what is bad. The mind is dyed by its thoughts.

"Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report: if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

This is in our power. . . .

LORD AVEBURY.

XLIII. FOR THE BLESSEDNESS OF SELF-GIVING

EVERLASTING FATHER, I beseech Thee to enable me to love Thee with all my heart and soul and strength and mind, and my neighbor as myself.

Help me to be meek and lowly in heart. Sweeten my temper and dispose me to be kind and helpful to all men. Make me kind in thought, gentle in speech, generous in action. Teach me that it is more blessed to give than to receive; that it is better to minister than to be ministered unto; better to forget myself than to put myself forward.

Deliver me from anger and from envy; from all harsh thoughts and unlovely manners. Make me of some use in this world; may I more and more forget myself and work the work of Him who sent me here; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Meditation: Self-forgetfulness is the secret of strength.

WOULDST thou truly behold thyself? Then must thou with open face behold as in a glass His glory. Thou wilt never become a power to thyself until God has become all in thee; thou wilt never really live until thou hast lived in Him.

Forget thyself, my soul. Forget thy pride and thy selfishness, thy cares and thy crosses, thy world which

thou bearest within thee. Unbar the doors of thy being to the sunshine of that other Presence that already stands without, waiting to get in.

And, verily, thy forgetfulness shall make thee strong, thy surrender shall make thee mighty, thy dying unto self shall make thee alive for evermore. Thy form shall be beautiful when it is gilded by His light, thy voice shall be melodious when it is tuned by His music, thy heart shall be on fire when it is quickened by His love: thou shalt be everything when God shall be all.

George Matheson.

XLIV. A PENITENTIAL PRAYER

FATHER, I bring to Thee the years stained with sin and failure. Thy voice within me, too long muffled with false pleasures and empty dreams, has at last pierced me to the quick and I am ashamed of all the evil I have done.

When I think of the disorder of my life, I dread the look of Thy holiness; and yet I am driven to Thee by a longing which no fear can chill and no sin can wither. Thou Virtue of my soul, enter into it and so fit it for Thyself that henceforth it may be wholly Thine. I ask for no lessening of the pain which sin has wrought me. Let my weakness be from Thee, for I know that then it shall be my strength.

Only abide Thou within me, Lord of my conscience, Strengthener of my will, Fulfiller of my hopes, and I will fear no more. Give me the glory of the lighted mind that henceforth I may see myself a debtor to every man, and count no sacrifice too grievous, no burden too heavy, if thereby I can serve the humblest of Thy children. Suffer me not to sink in dismay before the greatness of my debt, but summon Thou all my powers and give me no rest till I have paid the uttermost farthing. Amen.

Meditation: The true penitent shrinks from no atoning pain.

WITHOUT divine grace, indeed, man may not save himself. Yet grace demands that the individual will shall co-operate. "The only way to get rid of a past," says Phillips Brooks, "is to get a future out of it."

The case of the sinner is not hopeless; yet, on the other hand, he may not give up either in complacency or despair, trusting to others to do the work of redemption for him. The discipline of his sin is stern, ascetic, tragic. The utmost height of pure devotion will not be too much to pay in atonement and redemption.

In this, his own will shall have its part, even though at the same time he says: "Of myself I am nothing. It is the work of Divine Grace in me." To his passionate cry of "Mea culpa" comes the response from the community, "O Lamb of God, Who taketh away the sins of the world, grant us Thy peace."

The sinner knows that his own task is an endless one, in correspondence with the consequences of the guilty deed itself—for these consequences, unrecognized, perhaps, go on and on, and long after committing of the deed, when the sinner believes that his subsequent life has fully atoned for his guilt, in some hour of crisis in his life, they return to avenge themselves upon him.

He knows that the devotion of his whole life "and more lives yet" will not be too great a sacrifice to pay to redeem his guilt.

A. L. Sears.

XLV. FOR THE SPIRIT OF KINDNESS

IF from all Thy good gifts, O Lord, I may ask but one, let that one be the spirit of kindness!

Let others have fame and fortune and jewels and palaces, if I may but have the kindly spirit! Give greatness and power to those that want them, but give to me Brotherly Kindness! Make somebody else to be comely of visage, if only I may wear a kindly countenance!

May I never wound the heart of any faltering child of Thine! Make me to do the little unremembered acts that quietly help without intending it. Grant me to bear about the unconscious radiance of a life that knows no grudge, but loves all men because they are children of my Father Who loved them enough to send His Son to save them. Amen.

Meditation: The truly kind spirit seeks opportunities of serving others.

IT is not merely the relation in which I stand toward others whom I recognize as having certain claims upon my kindness; it is that which springs up where the will of kindness and charity is clear and pure and constant.

By the virtue of that will the Samaritan came to be a neighbor to the wounded man—came to know in relation to him the joy of loving service, the incomparable happi-

ness of doing good. The teaching of his example lies not merely in his refraining to ask what claim the sufferer had on him; we learn far more when we try to realize the habit of mind and heart which made him act as he did, and when we mark the outcome of his unquestioning charity, the relation which it constituted between the two men. For we learn that if we would find our place and work and duty, we must begin by trying our hearts, by seeing clearly what is the will and purpose, the temper and the hope, that we are taking with us into the world.

Do we intend, first of all, that anyhow it shall be a pleasant place for us—a place which shall yield us enjoyment, or success, or praise, or comfort? Do we know that pride or sloth has a hold on us which we have never resolutely disputed and shaken off? Or, is the will of love, the desire to imitate the love of God and His beneficence, the longing to lighten others' burdens, to gladden others' lives, deep and unchecked and dominant and effectual in us? Is there in us the charity which beareth, believeth, hopeth, and endureth all things? Is there really nothing on which our hearts are so much set as on the service of our fellow-men?

Then, quite surely in the ordinary ways and occurrences of life, in its common work and pleasures, wheresoever our course may lie, we shall find the relation of neighborliness, aye, and of friendship and of brotherhood, springing up; we shall "come to be near" to those with whom we have to do; we shall quicken with a real humanity all intercourse with men.

Francis Paget.

XLVI. FOR A SPIRIT OF LOVE TO GOD AND MAN

O LORD, grant to me so to love Thee, with all my heart, with all my mind, and with all my soul, and my neighbor for Thy sake, that the grace of charity and brotherly love may dwell in me, and all envy, harshness, and ill-will may die in me; and fill my heart with feelings of love, kindness, and compassion, so that, by constantly rejoicing in the happiness and good success of others, by sympathizing with them in their sorrows and putting away all harsh judgments and envious thoughts, I may follow Thee, Who art Thyself the true and perfect Love. Amen.

Meditation: Our true environment is God.

RECIPROCITY is the crown of love, and although it may be absent in one case or another, we cannot use the word "love," except metaphorically, in any field which does not admit of its possible reciprocation. Any injunction to love God, therefore, will sound abstract and unreal, till we remember that its cause and condition is that "He first loved us."

God's condescension, not man's aspiration, is the beginning of religious life. It is not we that work, but "He that worketh in us, both to will and to do according to His good pleasure." But true as this is, it is a truth which, at least in the present day, is far too seldom realized.

There have been times when the sense of the Divine oppressed men and led to superstition. But such times are not ours. The world of the present day believes, but does not tremble. It thinks, and speaks, and acts, and goes about its business as if our race were, for practical purposes, self-centered and alone.

Many causes have contributed to this. The psychological character of our philosophy, leading to agnosticism; our over-estimate of liberty, with its attendant shadow, self-assertion, to the comparative neglect of obedience, humility, reverence, and awe; the splendid spectacle of our vast achievements in mechanism and science—have all tended to reinforce the natural pride of the human heart, not less ready now than of old to say, "I am, and there is none beside me"; and the result is a society which seems to have forgotten God. And we cannot breathe its atmosphere without being tainted by its poison.

It seems, therefore, a very real effort to bear constantly in mind the fact that we are creatures and that our nearest relation is our Creator; for however dependent we may be upon our fellow-creatures, we are far more essentially dependent upon Him in "whom we live, and move, and have our being."

If we turn, then, to the divine share in the development of our faculties, we shall see that what we call our action may be better described as God's attraction, and that we advance in exact proportion as we let ourselves be led by Him.

J. R. Illingworth.

XLVII. FOR INSPIRATION IN SERVICE

HELP us, O Lord, to find our only success in selling our lives as dearly in service as our days may bring opportunity, and to regard as the only failure a coming short of what Thou dost expect of us!

Help us, O Lord, to live out on the open sea of Thine all-reaching love, and to move with the currents of Thy power; to fill life's sails with the fresh winds of spiritual truth and freedom; to sail up and down time's glorious coast, carrying a heaven-scented cargo of better life to men; to be conscious less of effort and more of power; to see the needy men on the shore and bring them the bread of life; trusting always that when the sails grow gray and the spars and planks begin to groan in the gale, Heaven's safe harbor may welcome in peace the Captain of the Abundant Life. Amen.

Meditation: The greatness of being human.

LET your life and your thought be narrow, and your sympathy will shrink to a like scale. It is a quality which follows the seeing mind afield, which waits on experience. It is not a mere sentiment. It goes not with pity so much as with a penetrative understanding of other men's lives and hopes and temptations. Ignorance of these things makes it worthless. Its best tutors are ob-

servation and experience, and these sense only those who keep clear eyes and a wide field of vision.

It is exercise and discipline upon such a scale, too, which strengthen, which for ordinary men come near to creating, that capacity to reason upon affairs and to plan for action which we always reckon upon finding in every man who has studied to perfect his native force.

This new day in which we live cries a challenge to us. Steam and electricity have reduced nations to neighborhoods; have made travel pastime, and news a thing for everybody. Cheap printing has made knowledge a vulgar commodity. Our eyes look, almost without choice, upon the very world itself, and the word "human" is filled with a new meaning. Our ideals broaden to suit the wide day in which we live.

We crave, not cloistered virtue—it is impossible any longer to keep to the cloister—but a robust spirit that shall take the air in the great world, know men in all their kinds, choose its way amid the bustle with all self-possession, with wise genuineness, in calmness, and yet with the quick eye of interest and the quick pulse of power. It is again a day for Shakespeare's spirit—a day more various, more ardent, more provoking to valor and every large design, even than "the spacious times of great Elizabeth," when all the world seemed new; and if we cannot find another bard come out of a new Warwickshire to hold once more the mirror up to nature, it will not be because the stage is not set for him.

WOODROW WILSON.

XLVIII. FOR A FRUITFUL LIFE

OH, for the faith that works inwardly by love and purifies the heart; the faith that works outwardly by love, and makes the evil good, the good better!

So with heart and hand may we give ourselves to do the work of Him Who sent us, while it is yet day; and while we joyfully accept the thousand unasked blessings which make our cup run over, may we count among those blessings all the drops of wholesome bitterness that mingle with the sweet; may we grow strong to endure hardness as good soldiers.

May ours be the helping hand for the weak; may we be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, as we are comforted of God. So may all our life be prayer, and may each one of us be as the good tree, divinely nourished at the root, and bringing forth good fruit for the refreshment of mankind and the glory of the Heavenly Husbandman. Amen.

Meditation: Faith finds God in the world and the world in God.

THE natural movement of faith is double, like the action of the valves of the heart. Our whole nature is ennobled and enhanced as we try to follow and claim the dimly perceived, perhaps, but deeply believed in, and

this enrichment takes the double form of expansion and concentration. Let us never forget that the one is as necessary as the other.

If we read the writings of the mystics, we shall find that nearly all the stress is laid on concentration; we are to draw all things unto God, detaching ourselves from all that we cannot translate into a symbol of the divine. Go not forth, they say to us; return unto thyself; in the inner man is the habitations of truth. This is a lesson we have all to learn. The inner chamber must be made pure for the Divine Guest.

We must not be careful about many things; but one thing is needful. Prayer and meditation will teach us much we cannot learn in any other way. If we cannot find God, it is perhaps because He is at home, while we are abroad; that He is ready for us, while we are too busy to attend to Him.

Yes, this is half the truth, but only half. In Jacob's vision, which you will remember is referred to by our Lord in St. John, the angels were seen, not only climbing up the ladder, but also going down it. Now, what does this mean? It means that we are not to run away from life even to find God, but that we are to come back with our treasure as soon as we have found it. We have succeeded, perhaps, in finding God in the world; then let us try to find the world in God.

W. R. Inge.

XLIX. FOR A SENSE OF THE DIVINE PRESENCE

FATHER, Whose life is within me and Whose love is ever about me, make Thy life manifest in my life this day, as with gladness of heart, without haste or confusion of thought, I go about my daily tasks, conscious of ability to meet every rightful demand, seeing the larger meaning of little things and finding beauty everywhere.

In the sense of Thy presence may I move through the hours, breathing the atmosphere of love, and seeking by love, rather than by anxious striving, to quicken and bless the lives of others. Knowing that I am a laborer together with Thee, may I live above all the influences that depress and discourage, and come into that assurance of faith which is itself the victory that overcometh the world.

And now I would enter into the secret place of Thy presence, that, hidden in Thee, my soul may be filled with a sense of Thy sheltering care and all my energies quickened into newness of life. Amen.

Meditation: The end of human evolution is companionship with God.

AS we review the overpowering spectacle of the evolution of countless ages, the slow development of new forms and their apparent culmination in man, we are stupefied at the immensity of it all.

Perhaps nothing is more astounding than that man—who so plainly is the outgrowth of lower forms, and whose organism bears the traces of the journey which it has traveled—suddenly turns his back on his past and announces to the rest of creation, "I am like you; you have helped to make me; but I am not of you. We are akin, but you are not my creator. Your society is not enough; I must talk with my God."

If we were watching the process of evolution from the outside, perhaps nothing would astonish us more than this. Where did man get this idea? How does he dare to make such an assertion, which his more humble forebears did not dream of? It would almost seem as if this were the moment for which God had been waiting. What could be a more valid reason for the long work of making a world of men, than that finally the world should turn and assert its own divinity and provide not a problem alone, but a companion?

Is this anthropomorphic? It is, and what of it? Any divine motive must be of the same order as a human motive to be in the faintest degree comprehensible to us, and therefore we must fall into either anthropomorphism or agnosticism. There is no alternative, and it is as much an unproved creed to assert that God's motives *cannot* be fathomed, as to affirm that they can.

E. H. Rowland.

L. FOR SELF-CONTROL

LORD, grant me self-control! Thou sayest to me, as to Thy servant of old, "Walk before me and be thou perfect." But how can I thus walk before Thee, Thou Heart-searching God, how avoid the hasty word, the irritated spirit, unless Thou help me every moment? I want steadiness and quietness of heart, no matter how sudden the surprise or how great the strain.

Oh, make good to me Thy promise that Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee. Nothing can take Thee by surprise, nothing outweary Thee. So help me this moment, and always, to put the reins of my life over into Thy hands. Let it be no longer I, but Christ that liveth in me. Amen.

Meditation: Character and action are both essential to a harmonious life.

I RECALL what Jesus said, "You must be born again"—that is His inexorable demand for the background of character. "If ye love me, keep my commandments"—that is His absolute insistence on the foreground of action. And the power of both of them—the power by which they both unite into one life—lies in the personal love and service of Himself.

This is the largest and richest education of a human

nature—not an instruction, not a commandment, but a Friend. It is not God's truth, it is not God's law—it is God that is the salvation of the world. It is not Christianity, it is not the Christian religion, it is Christ who has done for us, who is doing for us every day, that which our souls require.

What has He done for you, my friend? First, He has made you a new creature in Himself. He has given you a new character; and then He has guided you and ruled you, making you do new, good, holy actions in obedience to Him. Not two blessings, not two salvations—only one!

This is His promise to the soul which He invites, "Come, give yourself to me and you shall be new and do new things; you shall have opened within you the fullness of new admirations, new judgments, new standards, new thoughts —everything which makes new character; and there shall be new power for the daily task, new clearness, new skill in the things which every day brings to be done." The background and the foreground! "This ought ye to have done and not to leave the other undone"—the full, harmonious picture of a life!

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

LI. FOR A QUIET HEART

GRANT unto us, Almighty God, the peace that passeth understanding, that we, amid the storms and troubles of this our life, may rest in Thee, knowing that all things are in Thee, not beneath Thine eye only, but under Thy care, governed by Thy will, guarded by Thy love, so that with a quiet heart we may see the storms of life, the cloud and the thick darkness, ever rejoicing to know that the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee.

Guide, guard, and govern us even to the end, that none of us may fail to lay hold upon the immortal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Meditation: Faith can cope with every fear.

IT is a pathetic reflection that all around us, even in our own homes and close to our hearts, there are those who lead their lives under the burden of an unspoken fear.

These unhappy souls learn to keep silence, because when they have spoken they have been met only with ridicule or misunderstanding; and the very suppression of their misery leads to its intensification and fixes it more firmly in the subconscious. Much may be done by analyzing the fear, by laying bare its hidden roots, by seeing how it took origin in the mind.

We fear the unknown; but half our fear has vanished

when the unknown has been forced to give up its secret. But if a genuinely regenerative force is to enter the life and make peace and poise a permanent possession, something more is needed. Faith in the goodness of life, in the creative spirit of the universe, in the honor of men and in the virtue of women, in the powers of the human soul, and, if by grace of Heaven we can attain to it, faith in a destiny rich in boundless possibility, is the sovereign cure for this saddest distemper of the soul.

No crisis is too great, no agony is too poignant, no upheaval of foundations of existence too overwhelming for the constraining, steadying and uplifting energies of a moral trust.

One sometimes imagines oneself in a situation of terrible strain and stress, amid the terrors of shipwreck, or in the inferno of the modern battle-field, where the relentless forces of nature or the cruel engines of human ingenuity make havoc of youth, affection, beauty, the rich promise of the future as well as the garnered harvests of the past, and the doubt arises unbidden—What would faith in the invisible order of realities avail against the overpowering might of the immediate present?

It suffices us to reply that faith is not merely for the sunshine, but also for the darkness; not only for the quiet levels of our existence, but also for the wrack of tempest and the last delirium of despair.

Samuel McComb.

LII. FOR A GENEROUS SPIRIT

O THOU Who hast never left Thyself without a witness in any land, let me not narrow the range of Thy Spirit! Let me not say that Thy voice can only reach the members of the Church Visible!

I have seen gifted souls, inspired souls, who have not been numbered with Thy congregation; I have heard strains of Divine melody which have not come from Thy sanctuary; and I have wondered.

Let me wonder no more! Thou art larger than Thy tabernacle, Thou art wider than Thine altar. Thou travelest on the wings of the morning. In the uttermost parts of the sea I find Thee. If I say of a spot, "Surely here the darkness will cover me!" behind the curtain I meet Thee!

Do not let me call my brother an infidel because he joins not Thine outward Church; Thy Church can join him! Thou hast recognized hundreds on the road to Emmaus who have not recognized Thee. Thou hast seen Nathanaels under the fig-tree who never knew Thou wert passing by. Increase my charity, O God! Amen.

Meditation: A vision of the future wherein all peoples are seen contributing to the common welfare of the race.

THE vision that floats before me is a vast synthesis of all the experience which the human race has ever had or ever will have.

First, we must have full trust in reason to verify and define the facts of that experience. The agnostic is out of court, whether he calls himself a Christian or something else. We shall want everything that philosophy can tell us of the working of the divine within us, the whole teaching of science about its working in the world, the most searching criticism to unravel its course in history; and we shall need the highest of culture to throw over all divine charm of grace and beauty.

But this is not enough: no man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. No one man born in sin can reach the many-sided fullness of truth. We need a deeper social science to set our relations to one another in a fuller light of truth, and to shape our society more after the dim outline of that kingdom of God which every theist must believe in, though he may not call it by a Christian name.

But this again is not enough. As no one man can cover the divine expanse of truth, so neither can any one nation. After all the advances we boast of in our civilization, we have inherited by far the largest part of it from the past. History was old when the Pyramids were built, Greece and Israel already stand on the platform of an ancient civilization, and every generation has added to the august tradition which is now the common heritage of cultured nations.

G. M. Gwatkin.

LIII. FOR THE INFLUENCE OF THE DIVINE SPIRIT

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Till I am wholly Thine;
Till all this earthly part of me
Glows with Thy fire divine.

Breathe on me, Breath of God;
Fill me with life anew,
That I may love what Thou dost love
And do what Thou wouldst do.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Until my heart is pure;
Until with Thee I will one will,
To do and to endure.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
So shall I never die,
But live with Thee the perfect life
Of Thine Eternity. Amen.

Meditation: Evil desire to be replaced by the Spirit of Holiness.

CHRIST demanded virtue of the enthusiastic kind; He prohibited evil desires as well as wrong acts. Accordingly, it is one of the most remarkable features of His moral teaching that He does not command us to regu-

late or control our unlawful desires, but pronounces it unlawful to have such desires at all.

This higher form of goodness, though, of course, it had existed among the heathen nations, yet had never among them been sufficiently distinguished from the lower to receive a separate name. The earliest Christians, like the Christians of later times, felt a natural repugnance to describe the ardent, enthusiastic goodness at which they aimed by the name of virtue.

This name suited exactly the kind of goodness which Christ expressly commanded them to rise above. They therefore adopted another, regarding the ardor they felt as an express inspiration or spiritual presence of God within them, borrowed from the language of religious worship a word for which our equivalent is "holy"; and this inspiring power they consistently called the Spirit of Holiness, or the Holy Spirit.

Accordingly, while a virtuous man is one who controls and coerces the anarchic passions within him so as to conform his actions to law, a holy man is one in whom a passionate enthusiasm absorbs and annuls the anarchic passions altogether, so that no internal struggle takes place, and the lawful action is that which presents itself first, and seems the one most natural and most easy to be done.

SIR JOHN SEELEY.

LIV. FOR PATIENCE

TEACH me Thy patience, O my God, for I am but a creature of a day and know not how to wait. Give me the breath, the clear air, of the eternal years in which Thou workest quietly to bring Thy plans to fruition. Not in listless quiet would I wait, but with forward-looking faith which shall enable me to sing for joy of heart.

Build in my soul great expectations, high imaginings of love's triumph and the coming glory of Thy righteous kingdom, large thoughts of the value of the souls of men for whom Christ died. When my troubles come, afford me aid, that I may not be shaken, but stand fast. Enable me to finish the work which Thou hast given me to do. Amen.

Meditation: True patience is the endurance of ill in a spirit of filial trust in God.

THE virtue of patience is not sullen despair or the enforced but untrustful and unloving acceptance of evils which we cannot avoid, or from which, if they have once seized upon us, we cannot shake ourselves free.

It is true that not only the appearance, but the reality of a virtuous patience, is largely a matter of temperament and of conditions of the nervous system. But the attitude which the soul has toward the unavoidable ills of life, when it is simply yielding to the inevitable in an openly

quiet manner, because of the uselessness of struggle and debate with a nature that cares not, and heeds not, what becomes of the individual, is a very different attitude from that filial spirit of endurance which provides its justification in the faith that all is subject to a righteous and loving will.

The man who sets his teeth and makes no sign, when a restless and blind fate has seized him, may indeed display the qualities of a moral hero; but he cannot well exercise the gracious virtues of patience in the spirit of a sincere piety.

George T. Ladd.

LV. FOR THE DIVINE INDWELLING

O LORD, of Thy tender love, prepare Thou Thyself a place for Thyself in my heart. Empty my heart of every feeling, thought, emotion, desire, purpose, anxiety, fear, which may interfere with Thy love. Open my whole heart to receive Thee; let nothing shut Thee out, nothing be shut to Thee.

Thou alone canst fit my heart for Thyself: cleanse it wholly by Thy Spirit, that it may wholly love Thee; be wholly filled with Thee; wholly penetrated, enlightened, warmed, by Thee; that Thou mayest dwell in it forever, and it may love Thee with Thine own love in it everlastingly. Amen.

Meditation: All true love is the love of God.

THOU lovest God? Then thou lovest all that is good; for God is good, and from Him all good things come. But what is good? All is good except sin; for it is written, "God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good." Therefore, if thou lovest God, thou must love all things, for all things are of Him, and by Him, and through Him; and in Him all live, and move, and have their being. Then thou wilt truly love God. Thou wilt be content with God; and so thy love will cast out fear. Thou wilt trust God; thou wilt have the mind of God; thou wilt be satisfied with God's working, from the rise

and fall of great nations to the life and death of the smallest gnat which dances in the sun; thou wilt say forever, and concerning all things, I know in whom I have believed. It is the good Lord; let Him do what seemeth Him good.

Again; Thou lovest thy neighbor; thou lovest wife and child; thou lovest thy friends; thou lovest or wishest to love all men, and to do them good. Then thou lovest God. For what is it that thou lovest in thy neighbor? Not that which is bad in him? No, but that which is good.

Thou lovest him for his kindliness, his honesty, his helpfulness—for some quality in him. But from whom does that good come save from Christ and from the Spirit of Christ, from whom alone come all good gifts? Yes, if you will receive it—when we love our neighbors, it is God in them, Christ in them, whom we love—Christ in them, the hope of glory.

CHARLES KINGSLEY.

LVI. FOR DEVOTION TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD

O FATHER, calm the turbulence of my passions; quiet the throbbings of my hopes; repress the waywardness of my will; direct the outgoings of my affections; and sanctify the changes of my lot. Be Thou all in all to me and may all things earthly, while I bend them to my growth in grace, dwell lightly in my heart, so that I may readily, or even joyfully, give up whatever Thou dost ask for.

May I seek first Thy kingdom and righteousness, resting assured that then all things needful shall be added unto me. Father, pardon my past ingratitude and disobedience, and purify me, whether by Thy gentler or Thy sterner dealings, till I have done Thy will on earth and Thou removest me to Thine own presence with the redeemed in heaven. Amen.

Meditation: A steady progress in the spiritual life is to be coveted earnestly.

I WILL not deny that, up to the last moment, a human soul may repent and break away from its past; or that while there is life there is hope, even for the worst. No man can altogether extinguish the craving for good that is bound up with his spiritual nature; and the revolutions that have taken place in the character of those

who seemed the most degraded of men are such that no child of Adam and of God need be despaired of. But one thing is certain—that the price the individual has to pay for such change steadily grows with the years, like the price of the Sibylline books; and that even when it is paid, the result cannot be quite the same—the number of the books has diminished.

Men rise on stepping-stones of their dead selves to higher things, but if the old self has been allowed to grow mature and strong, they will not cease to be haunted by the ghosts of their former existence. Their lives will be disturbed by conflicts with their old habits and saddened by the consciousness of a still divided will.

They cannot have that security and peace, that joy and harmony with themselves, which is given to those whose life has been—on the whole, and in spite of the error and failure that comes even to the best—a steady progress from less to more, from an honest and wholesome boyhood to a generous and aspiring youth, and from that to a strong and resolute manhood and a serene and beautiful old age. Of such only is it true that their "path is as a shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

EDWARD CAIRD.

LVII. FOR SPIRITUAL REFRESHMENT

O GOD, help me to lift my thoughts, if it be but a little way out of the dust and smoke of life's endless battle. Let me forget for an hour my trivial cares and paltry hopes, and see all things, even the love and joy of this world, in the light of Thine eternal calm.

Father, my whole existence is unworthy and imperfect. I am only half true to the law Thou hast graven on my heart, half grateful or faithful to Thee, my Lord. As I grow older I cease to fall into the sins which beset me in youth, for they cease to tempt me; but I grow more engrossed with earthly interests, and less moved by the holy ambition to grow perfect as Thou, my Father, art perfect.

Even such repentance as I feel for my errors and shortcomings is cold and dull. Change this twilight of indifference into a fervent yearning for what is good and noble and holy, and bitter loathing for all things false and selfish and vile. Amen.

Meditation: Self-condemnation is the witness to the presence of the ideal.

IT is the consciousness that the ideal is the real which explains the fact of contrition. To become morally awakened is to become conscious of the vanity and nothingness of the past life, as confronted with the new ideal im-

plied in it. The past life is something to be cast aside as false show, just because the self that experienced it was not realized in it.

It is for this reason that the moral agent sets himself against it and desires to annihilate all its claims upon him by undergoing its punishment, and drinking to the dregs its cup of bitterness. Thus his true life lies in the realization of his ideal, and his advance toward it is his coming to himself. Only in attaining to it does he attain reality, and the only realization possible for him in the present is just the consciousness of the potency of the ideal.

To him to live is to realize his ideal. It is a power that irks, till it finds expression in moral habits that accord with its nature—that is, till the spirit has, out of its environment, created a body adequate to itself.

The condemnation of self, which characterizes all moral life and is the condition of moral progress, must not, therefore, be regarded as a complete truth. For the very condemnation implies the actual presence of something better. Both of the terms—the criterion and the fact which is condemned by it—fall within the same individual life. Man cannot, therefore, without injustice, condemn himself in all that he is; for the condemnation is itself a witness to the activity of that good of which he despairs.

HENRY JONES.

LVIII. FOR THE GRACES OF PENITENCE AND COURAGE

LORD, enlighten us to see the beam that is in our own eye, and blind us to the mote that is in our brother's. Let us feel our offenses with our hands, make them great and bright before us like the sun, make us eat them and drink them for our diet. Blind us to the offenses of our beloved, cleanse them from our memories, take them out of our mouths forever.

Let all here before Thee carry and measure with the false balances of love, and be in their own eyes and in all conjunctures the most guilty. Help us at the same time with the grace of courage, that we be none of us cast down when we sit lamenting amid the ruins of our happiness or our integrity; touch us with fire from the altar, that we may be up and doing to rebuild our city. Amen.

Meditation: An unforgiving spirit inhibits the love of God.

WHEN a man forgives another man who has sinned against him, he does not blot the man's sin out of existence, he does not make it as though it had never been. No; but he overlooks the sin and tries to forget it and goes on loving the sinner in spite of it. And this is what God does to us.

He loves us in spite of our sins, and will draw us to

Himself in disregard of them, so long as we are capable of loving our fellow-men and of showing our love by forgiving them their sins against us. If we retain our power of loving we shall be able to outgrow and live down our sins, we shall be able to prove that our sins were no sins, in that they did us no lasting moral harm.

We shall also be able, since love is the soul's response to love, to open our hearts to the sunshine of God's presence.

The intimate, the vital connection which exists in Christ's mind between God forgiving man his trespasses and man forgiving his fellow-men makes it clear what Christ finally meant by the sin for which there is no forgiveness. That sin is hatred, the sin of sins against man, the sin of sins against the Holy Spirit of God.

For God is ever drawing us to Himself by the magnetic might of love; and the hatred which makes a man incapable of loving his brother and forgiving him his trespasses makes him also incapable of yielding to the attractive force of God's love, and of receiving at His hands that boon of forgiveness which is but another name for the patience and the long-suffering of love.

ANON.

LIX. FOR FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD IN LOVE AND SERVICE

O MY KING and my loving Friend, I come to Thee to tell Thee that I love Thee. Unworthy though I am, full of doubts and fears, with thoughts unsanctified and work poorly done, yet I trust Thee and Thy redeeming love. Thou alone canst make me worthy, and I come just as I am. I can find purity and peace only at Thy feet. I can see light only as I stand in the light of Thy countenance. And I thank Thee that Thou art willing and waiting to receive me, and that Thou art ready to accept the love of my poor heart.

Take my hand in Thine and lead me where Thou wilt. The way may be long and the shadows deep, but I cannot be afraid when Thou art near. Thou knowest my need of Thee. O Lord, Thou callest me to follow Thee. Can it be that Thou needest me, that Thou, my perfect Friend, dost ask my aid in bringing the world to Thee? May I share in the divine service of redemption?

May I lead men to Thee and fight in Thy battle for righteousness? My Lord, I am unworthy of such an honor. But at Thy call I come. All I am and all I have is Thine. There is no place for me save in Thy service. Only with Thee can I find strength and know the meaning of my life. Fill me with joy as I live and toil to bring Thy kingdom.

And when Thou seest best let me serve Thee in the better world. Amen and Amen.

Meditation: Power and life are the marks of a genuine faith.

AS one reads the Gospels there meet him two great words which announce the nature of the teaching, as recurring *motifs* reiterate a central theme. The first is the word Power; the second is the word Life.

The first is the characteristic word of the Synoptic Gospels: "The multitudes glorified God which had given such power unto men"; "His word was with power"; "Until ye be endued with power from on high"; "Till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." The second is the word of the Fourth Gospel: "I am the bread of life"; "In him was life, and the life was the light of men"; "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life"; "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life"; "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life"; "I am come that they might have life."

Power and Life are, however, words, not of opinion or definition, but of expansion, vitality, momentum, growth. They are symbols of a dynamic faith. Power is generated to be applied. Life is given to be transmitted. To restrict power is to waste it; to save life is to lose it. The Christian life is not a thing to keep, but a thing to give; not an ancient tradition, but a new creation; not a stopping-place, but a way.

FRANCIS G. PEABODY.

LX. FOR A TRUE VISION OF LIFE

GREAT is Thy name, O God, and greatly to be praised. In Thee all my discordant notes rise into perfect harmony. It is good for me to think of the wonder of Thy being. Thou art most silent, yet most strong; unchangeable, yet ever changing; ever working, yet ever at rest, supporting, nourishing, maturing all things.

O Thou Eternal Spirit, who hast set my troubled years in the heart of Thy eternity, lift me above the power and evils of the passing time, that under the shadow of Thy wings I may take courage and be glad. I remember with sadness my want of faith in Thee. What might have been a garden I have turned into a desert by my wilfulness and sin.

This beautiful life which Thou hast given me I have wasted in futile worries and vain regrets and empty fears. Instead of opening my eyes to the joy of life, the joy that shines in leaf and flower, in the face of an innocent child, and rejoicing in it as in a sacrament, I have sunk back into the complainings of a narrow and blinded heart.

O deliver me from the bondage of unchastened desires and unwholesome thoughts. Fill me with a completer trust in Thee. Then every sorrow will become a joy. Then shall I say to the mountains that lie heavy on my soul, "Remove and be cast hence," and they shall remove, and nothing shall

be impossible unto me. This prayer I offer in the name of Jesus Christ my Lord. Amen.

Meditation: The mystical life means a more abundant life.

THE true mystic quest may as well be fulfilled in the market as in the cloister; by Joan of Arc on the battle-field as by Simeon Stylites on his pillar. It is true that since human vitality and human will are finite, many of the great mystics have found it necessary to concentrate their love and their attention on this one supreme aspect of the "will-to-live."

Hence the cloistered mystic obeys a necessity of his own nature; the necessity which has produced specialists in every art. But the life for which he strives, if he achieves it, floods the totality of his being; the "energetic" no less than the "contemplative" powers.

The real achievements of Christian mysticism are more clearly seen in Catherine of Siena regenerating her native city, Joan of Arc leading the armies of France, Ignatius creating the society of Jesus, Fox giving life to the Society of Friends, than in all the ecstasies and austerities of the Egyptian "fathers in the desert." That mysticism is an exhibition of the higher powers of love; a love which would face all obstacles, endure all purifications, and cherish and strive for the whole world.

In all its variations, it demands one quality—humble and heroic effort.

EVELYN UNDERHILL.

LXI. FOR SPIRITUAL REALITY

MY FATHER and my God, lead me and guide me on the dim and perilous path of life. Too long have I directed my own steps, too long have I lived without Thy wisdom, stumbling in the darkness because I did not love Thy light. But now I desire nothing, I need nothing but to know that Thou art in me and that I am in Thee.

Let the fire of Thy love consume the false shows wherewith my weaker self has deceived me. Make me real as Thou art real. Inspire me with a passion for righteousness and likeness to the Man of Nazareth that I may love as He loved, and find my joy as He found His joy in being and doing good. Only when, like Him, I am perfectly united to Thee, shall my life be truly alive.

Dwell Thou within me to give me His courage, His tenderness, His simplicity, to transform my own poor shadow-self into the likeness of His truth and strength. Amen.

Meditation: The secret of salvation lies in the entire surrender of the heart to the ideal.

IS it all an illusion, this experience of religion? "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" asks the doubting disciple. And the answer is, "Come and see!" Give the ideal life, of which religion teaches, the test of trying it.

The trial has been made of it, and we have the records of lives all the way from the experience of those lowest dwellers in the slums of London, whose stories of conversion Begbie recounts, to the experience of such saintly characters as St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Francis of Assisi, John Wesley, Martineau, Brooks, and others now living among us, who have told us of their experience—heroic, devoted lives of the active type like that of Doctor Grenfell; or of the type of those who, having learned

> How sublime a thing it is
> To suffer and be strong,

have brought from their own experience insight, sympathy, and help for others' need.

But how shall the Ideal be won? How shall we find "the way of life"? The real secret of salvation is the *absolute* and *entire* giving of the heart to the Ideal.

This is what we find in the stories of conversion cases; in the experience of mystics; in the pages of the *Imitation*. It is no half-hearted surrender of our wills which the unseen Good demands. Our consecration must be perfect. "Sell all thou hast and come, follow me." It means casting every idol from the heart. It means a transformation of our values.

A. L. Sears.

LXII. AN EVENING PRAYER FOR THE PRESENCE OF GOD

ABIDE with me, O Lord, this night, that the brightness of Thy love may be around me, and that the darkness may be not dark. Abide with me, O Lord, this night, for in loneliness I am not alone if Thou be nigh.

Abide with the sick, the sorrowful, the forsaken, and the weary, O Lord, to strengthen, to comfort, to cheer, and to give rest.

Shield me from that darkness of the soul which seeth Thee not, that loneliness of the heart which heareth not Thy voice. Abide with me through life and in the valley of the shadow of death forsake me not, but bid me be of good courage, for Thou art with me still. Amen.

Meditation: Entering into the soul's inner sanctuary.

HIGH, healthful, pure thinking can be encouraged, promoted, and strengthened. Its current can be turned upon grand ideals until it forms a habit and wears a channel. By means of such discipline the mental horizon can be flooded with the sunshine of beauty, wholeness, and harmony. To inaugurate pure and lofty thinking may at first seem difficult, even almost mechanical, but perseverance will at length render it easy, then pleasant, and finally delightful.

The soul's real world is that which it has built of its thoughts, mental states, and imaginations. If we will, we can turn our backs upon the lower and sensuous plane, and lift ourselves into the realm of the spiritual and real, and there gain a residence. The assumption of states of expectancy and receptivity will attract spiritual sunshine, and it will flow in as naturally as air inclines to a vacuum. Whenever the thought is not occupied with one's daily duty or confession, it should be sent aloft into the spiritual atmosphere.

There are quiet leisure moments by day, and wakeful hours at night, when this wholesome and delightful exercise may be engaged in to a great advantage. If one who has never made any systematic effort to lift and control the thought-forces will, for a single month, earnestly pursue the course here suggested, he will be surprised and delighted at the result, and nothing will induce him to go back to careless, aimless, and superficial thinking. At such favorable seasons the outside world, with all its current of daily events, is barred out, and one goes into the silent sanctuary of the inner temple of the soul to commune and aspire.

The spiritual hearing becomes delicately sensitive, so that the "still, small voice" is audible, the tumultuous waves of external sense are hushed, and there is a great calm.

HENRY WOOD.

LXIII. FOR A SENSE OF GOD'S LOVE

O MY FATHER, I bring my prayer unto Thee. I know that Thou wilt help me if I ask Thee. Help me to make my life full of love, perfect love, toward Thee and those among whom Thou hast placed me.

I know that I could never love Thee aright, did I not also love them faithfully. I would love and serve Thee truly, for I love Thee, my Father; but I need to feel Thy love, else mine might wax faint and feeble. Help me to keep the great truth ever bright before me, that Thou lovest me always. Then I should feel no task hard, no love toward others a difficulty. Then should I be satisfied and cheerful, though sorrow and care should come to me. Amen.

Meditation: He who loves Christ cannot but love all men.

LOVE, wheresoever it appears, is in its measure a lawmaking power. "Love is dutiful in thought and deed." And as the lover of his country is free from the temptation to treason, so is he who loves Christ secure from the temptation to injure any human being, whether it be himself or another.

He is indeed much more than this. He is bound and he is eager to benefit and bless to the utmost of his power all that bear his Master's nature, and that not merely

with the good gifts of the earth, but with whatever cherishes and trains best the Christ within them. But for the present we are concerned merely with the power of this passion to lift the man out of sin. The injuries he committed lightly when he regarded his fellow-creatures simply as animals who added to the fierceness of the brute an ingenuity and forethought that made them doubly noxious, become horrible sacrilege when he sees in them no longer the animal, but the Christ.

And that other class of crimes which belongs more especially to ages of civilization, and arises out of a cynical contempt for the species, is rendered equally impossible to the man who hears with reverence the announcement, "The good deeds you did to the least of these my brethren you did to me."

SIR JOHN SEELEY.

LXIV. IN THE EVENING OF LIFE

O GOD, Heavenly Father, whose gift is length of days, help us to make the noblest use of mind and body in our advancing years. According to our strength apportion Thou our work. As Thou hast pardoned our transgressions, sift the gatherings of our memory that evil may grow dim and good may shine forth clearly.

We bless Thee for Thy gifts, and especially for Thy presence and the love of friends in heaven and earth. Grant us new ties of friendship, new opportunities of service, joy in the growth and happiness of children, sympathy with those who bear the burdens of the world, clear thought and quiet faith.

Teach us to bear infirmities with cheerful patience. Keep us from narrow pride in outgrown ways, blind eyes that will not see the good of change, impatient judgments of the methods and experiments of others. Let Thy peace rule our spirits through all the trial of our waning powers. Take from us all fear of death and all despair or undue love of life, that with glad hearts at rest in Thee we may await Thy will concerning us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Meditation: Not death, but life, is important.

IT is wrong to think of destiny only in connection with death and disaster. When shall we cease to believe that death, and not life, is important; that misfortune is greater than happiness? Why, when we try to sum up a man's destiny, keep our eyes fixed only on the tears that he shed, and never on the smiles of his joy? Where have we learned that death fixes the value of life, and not life that of death? We deplore the destiny of Socrates, Duncan, Antigone, and many others whose lives were noble; we deplore their destiny because their end was sudden and cruel; and we are fain to admit that misfortune prevails over wisdom and virtue alike.

But, first of all, you yourself are neither just nor wise if you seek in wisdom and justice aught else but wisdom and justice alone. And further, what right have we thus to sum up an entire existence in the one hour of death? Why conclude, from the fact that Socrates and Antigone met with unhappy ends, that it was their wisdom or virtue brought unhappiness to them?

Does death occupy more space in life than birth? Yet do you not take the sage's birth into account as you ponder over his destiny? Happiness or unhappiness arises from all that we do from the day of our birth to the day of our death; and it is not in death, but indeed in the days and the years that precede it, that we can discover a man's true happiness or sorrow—in a word, his destiny.

M. MAETERLINCK.

LXV. FOR A SENSE OF THE SOUL'S GREATNESS (Modernism)

MEET me, O Lord, meet me alone! Let me feel for one moment the awful dignity of my own soul! I am not so much afraid of Thy judgment-day as of the general assize which men have figured there. I fear lest the sight of the crowd may dim the sight of my own importance. I have heard men say that my danger lies in my pride. No; it lies in my humility.

I have not realized the possibilities of my own soul. I have viewed myself as a fragment of the race, as a drop of the stream. In the hour of my vices I have said, "These have come from my fathers." I have sheltered myself under my own nothingness. I have hid myself from Thee among the lives of my ancestors.

Send the multitude away—the multitude of my ancestors. Meet me on my own threshold. Reveal to me my greatness! Read me the charter of my human freedom! When Thou hast magnified my soul I shall learn my need of Thee. Amen.

Meditation: We are not merely caused, but are causes.

IF conscience can make a man at times a coward, at other moments it can make him a hero. He divines something within him which no natural history can ex-

plain, the categorical imperative, as Kant called it, obedience to which issues in a well-knit personality, clearly defined and separate not only from the shifting scenery of this world, but from the Infinite God Himself. Through the effort to obey conscience we gain an ever richer fullness of being.

We are not merely caused, but are causes. We can create character. We can organize and spiritualize the raw material given us by heredity and nature. We can wrestle with passion and subdue evil impulse and pour into the veins of moral weakness the iron of noble purpose. Still more, there are times, all too rare, when, as we say, we rise above ourselves. The interests of life, the dull routine of our daily work, the conventions of the social order to which we belong, act as inhibitions on our deeper psychic energies, and all too successfully conceal the slumbering possibilities of moral greatness.

But let some catastrophe break through convention, let some sudden call of duty or affection sound in our sluggish ears, and in a moment the mask is thrown off, inward energies awake, and in self-forgetting devotion we take up burdens and share other's griefs and pour contempt on death itself. And what is this but a witness of the truth that we are infinitely more every moment than we know, that our true home is not earth and time, but God and eternity?

Samuel McComb.

LXVI. THANKSGIVING FOR UNANSWERED PRAYER

THOU hast called us to Thyself, Most Merciful Father, with love and with promises abundant; and we are witnesses that it is not in vain that we draw near to Thee.

We bear witness to Thy faithfulness. Thy promises are Yea and Amen. Thy blessings are exceeding abundant, more than we know or think. We thank Thee for the privilege of prayer, and for thine answers to prayer; and we rejoice that Thou dost not answer according to our petitions. We are blind, and are constantly seeking things which are not best for us. If Thou didst grant all our desires according to our requests, we should be ruined.

In dealing with our little children we give them, not the things which they ask for, but the things which we judge to be the best for them; and Thou, our Father, art by Thy providence over-ruling our ignorance and our headstrong mistakes, and art doing for us, not so much the things that we request of Thee as the things that we should ask; and we are, day by day, saved from peril and from ruin by Thy better knowledge and by Thy careful love. Amen.

Meditation: Sometimes our prayers are not answered because God is greater than we.

IN the prayers of very many of those who love God, slowly a change is wrought. We begin life with eager and impatient hearts; and in the impatience and the eagerness our religion on all its sides is likely to share. Our plans and hopes stand clearly before our minds; when danger threatens them, our sense of the danger is acute and vivid.

The imminence of the peril, the cruelty of the possible loss, the loveliness of that which seems about to be destroyed, the hopelessness of a future from which those fair forms are gone, or in which those carefully formed plans are to find no realization and have no place—with pitiless clearness all this is present to our minds, and we hasten to God with petitions most definite and most urgent.

But the God to Whom we have prayed is greater than we. His love is a love for individuals; but He sees the part in the whole, and time as eternity. . . .

With eternal patience, with a wisdom beyond our earthly comprehension, He works out His vast designs, and into those designs He weaves our lives; so that sometimes the answer we had so eagerly prayed for comes, but sometimes does not come—does not come, because in its place comes something greater, something longer in its process and wider in its issues, leading us out through slow years into fields of life more somber in color than those we had planned, but greater in labor and deeper in truth.

JAMES HASTINGS.

LXVII. A PRAYER OF ADORATION

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, we adore Thee as the God of light and power. Shine through the clouds that dim our vision. Strengthen our weak hearts, that we may love Thee and serve Thee in freedom and gladness. This world, which Thou hast committed to us, is radiant with Thy presence. Go where we will, we cannot flee from Thy Spirit, that speaks to us in the calm and order and beauty of Nature. For in our souls Thou dwellest, and openest our eyes to read Thy thought in sun and star, in field and flower. We bless Thee that Nature does not exhaust the fullness of Thy being. We rejoice that, in the fight with temptation, we are not alone, for Thou art our secret Helper. We praise Thee that in all our affliction Thou art afflicted, that in every sorrow or disappointment or failure Thou dost not give us over to our weak repining, but dost summon us to self-knowledge and to peace.

. . . . . .

Take from us all foolish fears, all sinful discontent. Fill our hearts with the sunshine of Thy love, so that we may give freely to all men of what we have and of what we are. These prayers we offer in Christ's name. Amen.

Meditation: Our union with God is unspeakably intimate.

HOWEVER high God stands above His creatures, He uses them as His instruments and organs and as the means of His grace. He is not blind nor deaf, for He sees with the eyes of all His creatures and hears with all their ears. No creature is so humble and small that it does not serve God as a sphere of His action. No creature is so great and high that it is not part of a still greater and higher, through which it contributes its proportion to the performance of God's will. So in God we are all united. Our little souls are parts of His soul which works through us as mind works through its thoughts. We are conscious of this infinite element within us, the point at which the collective Will of the Universe touches our will. We call it conscience. To know God as the Being whose knowledge comprehends all that is known or can be known is the highest of all knowledge. If a man would know everything there is to be known in the world, he need only know what that Being knows who is above the world; and did he know all else and did not know that there is such a Being, his knowledge would be but patchwork. Since God knows all, He knows our sorrows, our sin and shortcomings. He surveys the world through your eyes. He feels the sorrows of existence through your heart. Therefore let what you think and feel and see and do be worthy of His eyes and of His compassion.

ELWOOD WORCESTER.

LXVIII. ON NEW YEAR'S DAY

O THOU Who still remainest, though all else perish, my Father and my Friend, in spite of loss and failure, I rejoice today in the fulfilment of another year of life, of work, of thought and service.

Wherein I have failed to read Thy will, or to yield my heart to the pleadings of Thy love, wherein I have, by act or word, added to the sin and sorrow of the world, do Thou forgive and show to me once more Thy mercy and transform my evil into good. I dedicate myself anew to Thee this day. The past Thou hast withdrawn into Thy eternity, but the future Thou hast left still open to my care.

Renew my faith in Thee, my Father-God; refresh my tired spirit. Give me to renounce every weakness, to put beneath me every cowardice and fear. Give me to dare and to overcome. Grant me to live in noble purposes, in Christ-like deeds, that shall give to my years dignity and worth, and sustain me with the glad hope that beyond time and place Thou wilt permit me still to serve and to aspire; for Thy name's sake. Amen.

Meditation: Action, not feeling, is the true test of character.

NO matter how full a reservoir of *maxims* one may possess, and no matter how good one's *sentiments* may be, if one have not taken advantage of every concrete opportunity to *act*, one's character may remain entirely

unaffected for the better. With mere good intentions hell is proverbially paved.

A "character," as J. S. Mill says, "is a completely fashioned will"; and a will, in the sense in which he means it, is an aggregate of tendencies to act in a firm and prompt and definite way upon all the principal emergencies of life. A tendency to act only becomes effectively ingrained in us in proportion to the uninterrupted frequency with which the actions actually occur, and the brain "grows" to their use.

Every time a resolve or a fine glow of feeling evaporates without bearing practical fruit is worse than a chance lost; it works so as positively to hinder future resolutions and emotions from taking the normal path of discharge. There is no more contemptible type of human character than that of the nerveless sentimentalist and dreamer, who spends his life in a weltering sea of sensibility and emotion, but who never does a manly, concrete deed.

William James.

LXIX. A CHRISTMAS PRAYER

O CHILD of Bethlehem, give us thankful hearts today for Thee, our choicest gift, our dearest guest.

Let not our souls be busy inns that have no room for Thee and Thine, but quiet homes of prayer and praise where Thou mayst find fit company, where the needful cares of life are wisely ordered and put away, and wide, sweet spaces kept for Thee, where holy thoughts pass up and down, and fervent longings watch and wait Thy coming.

So when Thou comest again, O Blessed One, mayst Thou find all things ready, and Thy servants waiting for no new master; but for one long loved and known.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus. Amen.

Meditation: The greatness of life is to be measured only by the indwelling Christ.

NOW here, it seems to me, is just one of the divinest offices of our religion. It makes us feel the littleness to which we have reduced our lives, and then proclaims, in contrast with that littleness, the great scale on which God built those lives and the great capacity God meant for them to have.

"You have cramped your life," it seems to say. "You have made it small and narrow. By long unspirituality

you have made its door so low that none but short or stooping thoughts can enter. You have made its rooms so mean that great truths cannot live in them. But never dare to think that this was God's plan for your life.

"He drew its architecture on a lordly scale. He designed for you great, generous, capacious lives. He built you to be 'temples of the Holy Ghost.' There are chambers in your nature, walled up by long obstinacy or rubbished by long neglect, which were shaped and garnished for His own holy occupancy. Man—in the face of all his degraded humanity be it spoken—was made fit for a birthplace of the Christ."

To the sensualist who has turned his soul into a home of lust; to the poor inebriate whose life is reeking with the fumes of stale and sickly habit; to the trifler who has industriously tented himself about with glittering tinsel; to the mean man who has been deliberately cramping up his stingy heart, walling up windows, pinching in doors, studiously making his existence small—to each of them the Gospel brings its protests: "You may make your lives foul and tawdry and meager; you may diminish them and overcrowd them till there is no room for a noble thought or for a pure desire; but you do it at your peril. God made them roomy; and there is room for His Holy Son to find a nativity within them if you will only set and keep their chambers open."

PHILLIPS BROOKS.

LXX. AN EASTER PRAYER

O THOU that turnest the shadow of death into the morning, on this day of days our hearts exult with heavenly joy. All things conspire to make us sure of Thee: the gracious sunshine, the stir of springtime, the morning rapture of the birds; but greater far, a secret thrill runs through the air from far-off days.

Easter day breaks! Christ rises! Mercy every way is infinite.

The clouds are vanished from the sky, doubts are driven from the mind, Thou hast conquered our last enemy, and our tongues are filled with singing. Pain has been our portion here, but now we know that in all pain there lies the promise of redemption.

Thou dost plan our lives to cross the valley of Humiliation, to climb the hill Difficulty, and then at last descend where waits the shadow feared by man. But now we know it is a shadow only. The grim-barred gate of death swings back, and the glory from an endless world shines through, beyond the mind's imagining, beyond our hearts' desire. Our Jesus now is crowned with glory, clothed in victory, and vested with the keys of death and hell.

Praise be unto Thee, O Lord most high. Amen.

Meditation: In Christ is seen the law of love triumphing over the law of sin and death.

IN the life of Jesus of Nazareth we see, as in a pure crystal, the whole world-drama of the law of righteousness and life overcoming the law of sin and death.

In the confusion of good and evil in the world it needed a supreme degree of spiritual insight to discern what human goodness really consisted in, and what was sin; but in the precepts of the Christ we see collected the whole true secret of man's well-being and true power, the way of life which will make the individual life secure upon the rock of salvation, the way of social life which can alone bring a lasting and universal good-will to the sons of men.

In His example we see that the love which must animate the life of true power must persist in face of all possible animosity and discouragement, in the face of torture and death, and even the sense of desertion by the God of love.

In His resurrection we see that the spiritual power of the life of love is not bounded by this life; the splendid outburst of the power of the risen Christ that was seen in the joy, the power, and the rapid multiplication of the early Church and the final Christianizing of Europe is material evidence to us, who are material creatures, that the law of the spirit of life, as exemplified in the ardent love of Christ, does indeed triumph over the law of sin and death.

THE AUTHOR OF "PRO CHRISTO ET ECCLESIA."

Prayers for a Time of War

LXXI. FOR SPIRITUAL BLESSING IN SORROW

O THOU in Whom we live and move and have our being, Who seest where we are blind, Who knowest where we are ignorant, do as Thou thinkest fit with us this day.

We ask Thee not, we dare not ask Thee, for earthly blessings for ourselves or those we hold most dear, but we pray Thee to grant us faith and hope and love without measure.

We ask Thee to be the crown of all our joys, our abiding shelter in every sorrow, the good shepherd of Thy flock throughout the world, leading them through weariness and trouble here to Thy heavenly fold on high, where peace and joy forever dwell, and where Thou wilt be all in all. Amen.

Meditation: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy."

THE moment we set our minds upon this theme, "The joys that are purchased by sorrow," we perceive its far-reaching, manifold applications to the life and the energy of man. To say that well-nigh every joy in human life has some element or touch of sadness blended with it is a truth; but not the truth we are endeavoring to express today. He who was the deepest student of the heart's joy and suffering, of life's mixed light and darkness, that has spoken since the Hebrew psalmists, has spoken of "our joys" as "three parts pain."

Granting that they are, this is not the thought that is chiefly embodied in that magnificent line of hope. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." That tells us not so much of the pain that may be mixed with joy, but of the joy that is purchased and purchasable only through pain. There is such joy, and it is the harvest of those who have been brave enough to sow in tears. Herein is a law reaching, in its scope, from things physical and material up to things that link our nature in with the very Cross and Passion of the Son of God, the law of joy that is purchased by sorrow.

Some are shut out from the scope of this law, so that it does not cover them nor touch them; they live and die outside of its influence. Who are they that live outside of its influence? They are those who have sought happiness as an end in itself, and as the chief purpose of life, and who have set themselves to attain that end by evading pain, and strain, and the hardness of things wherever they can.

I speak in perfect kindness and good faith when I say, "They have their reward"; such a theory of life has its obvious compensations. But such a life, with its inherent dread of discomfort, and, at last, its almost involuntary protest against sorrow, seems, I think, to be doing its own finer selfhood a perpetual injustice in making so much of ease; for it is compelling itself to live, so far as possible, outside of that broad zone of experience, and outside of that great law within which are surely comprehended some of the most truly grand manifestations of character, and some of the most truly lofty joys, which have ever been—the joys that are purchased by sorrow.

T. Cuthbert Hall.

LXXII. FOR AN END OF WAR

UNTO Thee, O Lord, we cry, in the night of the world's darkness, for the coming of the dawn of peace. Is not the earth Thine? Are not the hearts of all men in Thy keeping?

Remember the desolate homes, the long suspense of waiting, the sorrows of the exiled and the poor, the growth of hate, the hindrance of good, and make an end of war. By the love we bear to fathers, brothers, lovers, sons, by the long agony of trench and battle-field and hospital, by the woe brought home to the hearts of mothers and by the orphaned children's need, hasten Thou the coming of the ages of good-will.

Raise up leaders for the work of peace. Show us our part in the redemption of the world from cruelty and hate and make us faithful and courageous. In the name of Him whose kingdom is our heart's desire and whose will for men is love. Amen.

Meditation: War is evil, but not wholly evil.

DAY after day come streams of letters from the front, odd stories, fragments of diaries, and the like, full of the small, intimate facts which reveal character; and almost with one accord they show that these men have not fallen, but risen. No doubt there has been some selection in the letters; to some extent the writers repeat what they wish

to have remembered, and say nothing of what they wish to forget; but, when all allowances are made, one cannot read the letters and the despatches without a feeling of almost passionate admiration for the men about whom they tell.

They were not originally a set of men chosen for their peculiar qualities. They were just our ordinary fellow-citizens, the men you meet on a crowded pavement. There was nothing to suggest that their conduct in common life was better than that of their neighbors, yet now, under the stress of war, having a duty before them that is clear and unquestioned and terrible, they are daily doing nobler things than we, most of us, have ever had the chance of doing—things which we hardly dare hope that we might be able to do.

I am not thinking of the rare achievements that win a V. C. or a cross of the Legion of Honor, but of the common, necessary heroism of the average men; the long endurance, the devoted obedience, the close-banded life in which self-sacrifice is the normal rule and all men may be forgiven except the man who saves himself at the expense of his comrade. I think of the men who share their last biscuit with a starving peasant, who help wounded comrades through days and nights of horrible retreat, who give their lives to save mates or officers; of the expressions on faces that I have seen or read about, something alert and glad and self-respecting in the eyes of those who are going to the front, and even of the wounded who are returning.

GILBERT MURRAY.

LXXIII. FOR FAITH IN THE VICTORY OF GOODNESS

AMID the many clashing forces which together constitute the world, some of which make for life, health, peace, joy; others for discord, disease, misery, death—grant that the little I can do may be sweet, sound, just, generous; allied to the great stream of force making for good which is Thy will.

This once secured, may I drop at Thy feet my burden of responsibility, knowing that in any event the issue is never the result of my single effort, but the resultant of ten thousand forces of which my act is only one.

When the event is outwardly and visibly successful, may I not be puffed up, but rather modestly thankful for the other conditions which make the success of my effort possible; humbly grateful for the privilege of sharing in an achievement which is mainly Thine.

When the event is apparent failure, may I have the assurance that it is due to factors which I did not contribute and could not control; that in spite of this particular defeat the powers of good are so much stronger, the powers of evil so much weaker, for the good effort I put forth. Amen.

Meditation: God appoints us the period of time in which we are to live and do our work.

AWAY with that cowardly language which some of us are apt to indulge in when we speak of one period as being more dangerous than another; when we wish we were not born into the age of revolutions, or complain that the time of quiet belief is passed, and that henceforth every man must ask himself whether he has any ground to stand upon, or whether all beneath him is hollow.

We are falling into the temptation when we thus lament over it. We are practically confessing that the evil spirit is the lord of all; that times and seasons are in his hand. Let us clear our minds from every taint of that blasphemy. God has brought us into this time; He, and not ourselves or some dark demon. If we are not fit to cope with that which He has prepared for us, we should have been utterly unfit for any condition that we imagine for ourselves.

In this time we are to live and wrestle, and in no other. Let us, humbly, tremblingly, manfully, look at it, and we shall not wish that the sun could go back its ten degrees, or that we could go back with it. If easy times are departed, it is that the difficult times may make us more in earnest; that they may teach us not to depend upon ourselves.

If an hour is at hand which will try all the inhabitants of the earth, it is that we may learn for all to say, "Lead us not into the temptation" of our times; that so we may be enabled with greater confidence and hope to join in the cry of every time, "Deliver us from evil."

FREDERICK DENISON MAURICE.

LXXIV. A SOLDIER'S PRAYER

Lord, ere I join in deadly strife
And battle's terrors dare,
First would I render soul and life
To Thine Almighty care.
And when grim death, in smoke-wreaths robed,
Comes thundering o'er the scene,
What fear can reach the soldier's heart,
Whose trust in Thee has been?

Meditation: Courage is an achievement of the will motived by right and love.

THE sources of the courage which in the mass of men will stand all kinds of danger are not to be found only in physical, but much more in moral and spiritual training. Courage is of the first importance for life. It is well to get it well into our being; and one of the first things to do, in order to have it at all times and in all trials, is to get rid of the notion that it is only a physical quality, and to understand that it can be won by the will when the will toward it is directed by noble motives in accordance with the claims on us of Right and Love.

There are sure to be hours in life when the whole success of all whom we lead—it matters little whether we only lead our own household or a whole army—rests on our facing danger boldly. We must accustom ourselves to realize that; and then the importance of our courage to

others must so dwell upon our minds that, when the hour of danger comes, we shall be able, from the force of the high motive of our courage being the salvation of others, to master our trembling nerves, if we are of that temperament; to divide, as it were, our soul from our body; and to conquer the nervous thrill of the body by the high passion of the soul.

You remember the story told of Henri IV.; it is a good illustration. He was naturally afraid in danger, and when he first went into battle at the siege of Cahors his body shook all over with fear. Then he was heard to say: "Vile carcass! thou tremblest. But thou wouldst tremble ten times more if thou knewest where I am going to take thee." And he rushed forward twenty yards ahead of his men, and his ax was the first to strike the gates. Lift the soul above the body; it is the secret of courage.

STOPFORD A. BROOKE.

LXXV. FOR TRUST IN GOD'S GUIDANCE

O LORD, by all Thy dealings with me, whether of joy or pain, of light or darkness, let me be brought to Thee.

Let me value no treatment of Thy grace simply because it makes me happy or because it makes me sad, because it gives or denies me what I want; but may all that Thou sendest me bring me to Thee, that, knowing Thy perfectness, I may be sure in every disappointment that Thou art still loving me, and in every darkness that Thou art still enlightening me, and in every enforced idleness that Thou art still using me—yea, in every death that Thou art giving me life, as in His death Thou didst give life to Thy Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Meditation: The blessing of grief is won by trust.

TO curse grief is easier than to bless it, but to do so is to fall back into the point of view of the earthly, the carnal, the natural man. By what has Christianity subdued the world if not by the apotheosis of grief, by its marvelous transmutation of suffering into triumph, of the crown of thorns into the crown of glory, and of a gibbet into a symbol of salvation? What does the apotheosis of the cross mean, if not the death of death, the defeat of sin, the beatification of martyrdom, the raising to the skies of voluntary sacrifice, the defiance of pain?

O Death, where is thy sting?
O Grave, where is thy victory?

By long brooding over this theme—the agony of the just, peace in the midst of agony, and the heavenly beauty of such peace—humanity came to understand that a new religion was born—a new mode, that is to say, of explaining life and of understanding suffering.

Suffering was a curse from which man fled; now it becomes a purification of the soul, a sacred trial sent by eternal love, a divine dispensation meant to sanctify and ennoble us, an acceptable aid to faith, a strange initiation into happiness.

Oh, power of belief! All remains the same, and yet all is changed. A new certitude arises to deny the apparent and the tangible; it pierces through the mystery of things; it places an invisible Father behind visible nature; it shows us joy shining through tears, and makes of pain the beginning of joy.

Crucify the rebellious self, mortify yourself wholly, give up all to God, and the peace which is not of this world will descend upon you. For eighteen centuries no grander word has been spoken; and although Humanity is forever seeking after a more exact and complete application of justice, yet her secret faith is not in justice, but in pardon, for pardon alone conciliates the spotless purity of perfection with the infinite pity due to weakness—that is to say, it alone preserves and defends the idea of holiness, while it allows full scope to that of love.

HENRI-FREDERIC AMIEL.

LXXVI. FOR COURAGE IN BEREAVEMENT

O GOD, Thou bindest me to life by sweet, tender ties—father, mother, brother, sister, husband, wife, son, daughter, lover, friend. All the tendrils of my heart are twined around them; all my purposes revolve about them; all my success is measured by their joy.

Thou takest them away. Then I am tempted to withdraw altogether from the world, in hopeless dejection, a burden to myself and a sorrow to my remaining friends, or hide myself in foreign lands, or plunge madly into meaningless activities, vainly striving to run away from the grief I can never escape.

Make me strong to resist this cowardice. Forbid that I should idly accept my dear one's mortality. In the hour of sore bereavement may I summon the great resources of the soul—memory, imagination, faith, hope, love.

May I gratefully recall all that my beloved one was to me; all that he stood for in the world. May I live even more constantly in the companionship of his spirit; may I carry out in the old spheres in which we together moved, so much of his purpose as I can. May I be kind to the friends he loved; devoted to the community in which he lived; loyal to the causes which he served. Thus in my life may he still live on, to my own comfort, and the welfare of the world. Amen.

Meditation: Victory over death is both a human task and a divine gift.

IT is most needful to recollect that the victory is a *gift*. I do not mean merely that the final victory over the grave is a gift. That, too, we may often forget. We may believe that we shall achieve our immortal happiness by some splendid exertions or faith of ours. We may think that it is to be won by a strife with the Divine Will, not by trust in it and submission to it. And we shall easily fall into this mistake if we do not look upon every preparatory victory of life over death as a gift of God.

Each morning that we wake out of sleep, each power that we are able to exert over brute matter, each energy of the body, each return of health after sickness, each hard discovery, each power which the will exerts over the inclinations of our own flesh, each act of just government over other men, each influence we are able to put forth for making other men more wise or more free—of this we must say, "God giveth it"; this we must accept as the fruit and manifestation of His will, as the pledge and foretaste of a final victory.

Believe it to be so, young man, rejoicing in the days of thy youth, in the fullness and freshness of life; believe it to be so, weary pilgrim, struggling under the load of daily and increasing pain; God in each case is testifying, if thou wilt understand the testimony, that life in thee is stronger than death, that life in thee shall overcome death.

FREDERICK DENISON MAURICE.

LXXVII. FOR DIVINE HELP IN EVERY EMERGENCY

THOU art the breath of my soul, O Beloved! How can I forget Thee even for an hour? My incurable helplessness points to Thee. The unaccountable strength in my nature also points to Thee.

If I am alone, Thou art at my side. And, when many surround me, lo! Thou art there. Rob Thou me of my hopelessness and helplessness, and be all in all to me.

Real and faithful God, let me put my trust in Thee. Give me the rescue of Thy assurance amid these wild waters of the world. In the serene light of Thy countenance let all despondency flee.

The past bears infinite testimony to the truth of Thy providence. Thou reservest Thyself for me in the future. I do but know that Thou art with me in the present. In that consciousness all anxiety is set at rest. Amen.

Meditation: Not self-denial, but self-devotion, is the secret of the higher life.

THE idea of self-sacrifice is often conceived too barely, too negatively. Mere self-abnegation is a fruitless thing except when it is inspired by self-devotion. These are two sides, as it were, of the one "living sacrifice," the

"reasonable service" of which we speak in the language of St. Paul.

Just as the death of Christ cannot with any truth be separated from His life, of which it is the immediate consummation, both together making the fulfilment of the purpose for which He came into the world—"to do thy will, O God"—so in the aim and aspiration of the Christian there are inseparably blended the two aspects of self-devotion and consequent self-denial.

And the root principle of both is the Divine Love.

"Though I give all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned and have not charity, I am nothing." Here is the main defect which we have cause to mourn, and which we pray for grace to overcome, the feebleness and poverty of the central motive, from which all else should spring.

If we only realize more fully in our hearts the mercies that surround us, the loving guidance that has brought us hitherto, the support of the everlasting arms, the blessings of human friendships and affection, surely we should go forth as "light as carrier-birds in air," ready to encounter gladly any loss, any disappointment, any renunciation, if only we may do something to serve our brethren and to fill up in our measure some part of what is still wanting (and how such is wanting!) of the complete humanity which was prefigured in Christ. Let us then make self-devotion our ideal, and let self-sacrifice follow if it must.

LEWIS CAMPBELL.

LXXVIII. IN BEHALF OF A FRIEND WHO HAS PASSED INTO THE UNSEEN

O GOD, the God of spirit and of all flesh, in whose embrace all creatures live, in whatsoever world or condition they be, I beseech Thee for him whose name and dwelling-place and every need Thou knowest. Lord, vouchsafe him light and rest, peace and refreshment, joy and consolation, in Paradise, in the companionship of saints, in the presence of Christ, in the ample folds of Thy great love.

Grant that his life (so troubled here) may unfold itself in Thy sight, and find a sweet employment in the spacious fields of eternity. If he hath ever been hurt or maimed by any unhappy word or deed of mine, I pray Thee of Thy great pity to heal and restore him, that he may serve Thee without hindrance.

Tell him, O gracious Lord, if it may be, how much I love him and miss him and long to see him again; and, if there be ways in which he may come, vouchsafe him to me as a guide and guard, and grant me a sense of his nearness, in such degree as Thy laws permit.

If in aught I can minister to his peace, be pleased of Thy love to let this be; and mercifully keep me from every act which may deprive me of the sight of him as soon as our trial-time is over, or mar the

fullness of our joy when the end of the days hath come.

Pardon, O gracious Lord and Father, whatsoever is amiss in this my prayer, and let Thy will be done; for my will is blind and erring, but Thine is able to do exceeding, abundantly above all that we ask or think; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Meditation: The message of psychical research confirms the premonitions of philosopher and saint.

FIRST, there is a future life. That alone is certainly an assurance of tremendous moment. It is the central question, the one great, dominating query, definitely answered. We know little of the conditions of that life. Perhaps the patience of the investigator will some time be rewarded with exact knowledge of these conditions; there is ground for optimism.

As yet, however, in many respects the pictures given of the life beyond are not concordant, and for the present it is far better to suspend our judgment in regard to conditions there.

We get our just deserts. Each person, remaining after death essentially himself, gravitates without any formal judgment to the level appropriate to the stage of moral development attained in life, and has an endless opportunity to progress and achieve. The opportunity and the struggle for self-improvement persist along with life.

ARTHUR WHITZEL.

LXXIX. FOR DIVINE INSTRUCTION

O LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, Who out of Thy treasure bringest things new and old for man's instruction, let nature become to us a parable of grace.

By Thy lightnings enlighten us and consume us not; by Thy thunders awe us without terror; sit we loose to that earth which may quake and must depart, shelter Thou us in a peaceable habitation when it shall hail coming down on the forest, and this world shall be low in a low place.

Let voices of the past persuade us to repentance and faith, of the present to amendment and hope, of the revealed future to holiness and charity; yea, let all voices persuade us to charity. Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth. Grant us grace to hear, though both our ears tingle, and to obey, though taking our life in our hand; for His sake, Whose merit exceeds our demerit, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Meditation: The world is a manifestation of God, but we often falsify what it would say to us.

DOES a man ask what this world is, and why man is placed in it?

It was that the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world might be clearly seen. Have we ever stood

beneath the solemn vault of heaven, when the stars were looking down in their silent splendor, and not felt an overpowering sense of His eternity? When the white lightning has quivered in the sky, has that told us nothing of power, or only something of electricity?

Rocks and mountains, are they here to give us the idea of material massiveness, or to reveal the conception of the strength of Israel? When we take up the page of past history and read that wrong never prospered long, but the nations have drunk one after another the cup of terrible retribution, can we dismiss all that as philosophy of history, or shall we say that through blood and war and desolation we trace the footsteps of a presiding God, and find evidence that there sits at the helm of this world's affairs a strict, rigorous, and most terrible justice?

To the eye that can see, to the heart that is not paralyzed, God is here. The warning which the Bible utters against the things of this world bring no charge against the glorious world itself. The world is the glass through which we see the Maker. But what men do is this: They put the dull quicksilver of their own selfishness behind the glass, and so it becomes not the transparent medium through which God shines, but the dead opaque which reflects back themselves. Instead of lying with open eye and heart to receive, we project ourselves upon the world and give.

So it gives us back our own false feelings and nature. Therefore it brings forth thorns and thistles; therefore it grows weeds—weeds to us; therefore the lightning burns with wrath and the thunder mutters vengeance.

FREDERICK W. ROBERTSON.

LXXX. IN MEMORY OF A FRIEND WHO OBEYED HIS COUNTRY'S CALL[1]

LORD of the living and the dead, infinite Spirit Whose love and goodness we adore, we lift a voice of sorrow and of hope to Thee. Our hearts are sad because one whom we love has been taken from us. Yet, mingled with our grief is gratitude, hope, and trust. As we stand in the presence of our dead we know that it is not defeat, but victory; that his life has not set in a night of pain and gloom, but amid the splendors of Thy everlasting day.

We bless and glorify Thy holy name for the grace which Thou didst vouchsafe to him who has passed into Thy nearer presence. We rejoice amid our sorrow that it was given to him to make the great sacrifice, to offer his life on the altar of his country's need. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." We thank Thee that Thou hast accepted his sacrifice, with Thy gracious word, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

[1] This prayer was written for the memorial service of Ezra Charles Fitch, Jr., of the Fifth Royal Highlanders Black Watch (Canada), who died October 13, 1917. Mr. Fitch, on his country's entry into the war, enlisted in a Canadian regiment, as he had passed the age limit prescribed by the American regulations. While discharging military duty he was stricken with pneumonia, which ended fatally. He laid down his life for his country as really as those who fall on the firing-line.

For us who sorrow we pray. Let our grief cleanse us and make us free; let it be "strong to consume small troubles, to commend great thcughts, thoughts lasting to the end."

May it be that as our friend has conquered death and the fear of death, we too may rise to the height of his great deed and breathe the air of immortality, and know that in Thy good time hearts that are sundered here shall be reunited in the country of their hopes, where Thou shalt make us glad in Thine abundant answer to every bygone prayer. If indeed Thou dost put this mighty thought within us, then shall we purify ourselves from every wrong and strengthen ourselves for every duty.

Unto Thee, God and Father of us all, we ascribe glory and praise forever and ever. Amen.

Meditation: A soldier in the terrors of battle may be governed by the highest motives.

WITHOUT the least desire to defend or encourage war, we may recognize that in the life of the soldier there are many noble elements.

For he may be thinking, not how to destroy, but how to save; he may be eager to fight, but even more eager to make peace. He may unite the resolve of the warrior with the tenderness of a child; when he has most to care for in his life, he will be most ready to resign all for his country's sake.

BENJAMIN JOWETT.

LXXXI. FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE

ALMIGHTY GOD, Ruler of the nations, we entreat Thee in this hour of the world's anguish to have pity upon us and upon all men. Thy children faint for fear and for expectation of the things which are coming on the earth.

In Thee is our only hope. Move Thou upon the wills of men and constrain the peoples in the paths of unity and peace. Hast Thou not called us to share with Thee in the order and government of the world? Grant us wisdom, O Lord, that we may discern the causes of conflict, the things that make for international hate and jealousy.

We know that only as we yield ourselves as instruments of peace, can peace come to our stricken earth.

Quicken our consciences that we may feel the sin and shame of war. Inspire us with courage and faith that we may lift up our voices against private greed, social injustice, the aggression of the strong on the weak, and whatsoever else works enmity between man and man, class and class, nation and nation. Create within us a passion for the reign of righteousness, the spread of brotherhood and good-will among the nations, so that we may hasten the fulfilment of Thine ancient word, "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Amen.

Meditation: A false and a true motive for condemning war.

WARS may be condemned from two points of view. From the one, every individual human being is counted so holy that no institution, no social group, no principle or ideal, is worth shedding any one's blood for. This attitude of mind found its most influential protagonist in Count Tolstoi. Wars are wrong because they involve sacrifice of human lives; it is nations as political units that wage war, and therefore all governments are at enmity with men.

The leaders of all the so-called international peace movements continually defend their cause from this point of view. In so far they condemn patriotism as a vice, and they would sacrifice the idealism of nations to the interests of peace.

There is another point of view from which war can and should be condemned. A true peace movement would be nationalistic. It would find out what organized interests within each nation make for war; it would insist that all governments become champions of economic justice the world over, because private greed is the war god. There is not too much patriotism, but too little of the right sort.

A true peace movement would educate the masses of the people, and especially the statesmen and politicians and voters of all countries, in the higher functions of nations.

STANTON COIT.

LXXXII. THANKSGIVING FOR THE REVELATION OF A FUTURE LIFE

THOUGH fidelity of soul can do much to rob the grave of its victory, still, I too must soon follow the dear ones gone before. For them and for myself I crave more than a transient survival in loyal hearts who take up and carry on our work.

For this true immortality I turn in entire confidence to Thee. I know not how, out of a world which gave no evidence of anything but matter and force, Thou hast called forth the life and love which are its crowning ornaments. I know no more and no less of how Thou canst lead these broken lives and severed loves of ours to the fulfilment they demand. But all I know of love in myself, all I see of it in human hearts, makes me confident that Thou willest this fulfilment.

. . . . . .

I thank Thee for reported visions of departed ones; yet I would not lean on these material props more weight than they will bear. My confidence is in Thee, as Thou art revealed in my own soul, in humanity at its best, and in Jesus Christ; not in doubtful traditions or alleged manifestations.

As Thou hast made this life of ours on earth a closed circle, free from violent interruptions, may I accept it as the call to concentrate my little strength, during my brief sojourn, on life and love and duty

as I find them here; trusting my beloved and myself entirely to Thy power, Thy wisdom, and Thy love for future growth in character and progress in blessedness. Amen.

Meditation: A scientist makes confession of his belief in immortality.

I AM convinced of continued existence, on the other side of death, as I am of existence here. It may be said, you cannot be as sure as you are of sensory experience. I say I can. A physicist is never limited to direct sensory impressions, he has to deal with a multitude of conceptions and things for which he has no physical organ; the theories of electricity, of magnetism, of chemical affinity, of cohesion, aye, and the apprehension of the ether itself, lead him into regions where sight and hearing and touch are impotent as direct witnesses.

In such regions everything has to be interpreted in terms of the insensible, the apparently unsubstantial, and in a definite sense the imaginary.

That being so, I shall go further to say that I am reasonably convinced of the existence of grades of being, not only lower in the scale than man, but higher also, grades of every order of magnitude from zero to infinity, and I know by experience that among these beings are some who care for and help and guide humanity, not disdaining to enter even into what must seem petty details, if by so doing they can assist souls striving on their upward course.

SIR OLIVER LODGE.

LXXXIII. A PRAYER OF INTERCESSION FOR THE WORLD

ENLIGHTEN, O God, this erring, groping world, that ignorance and sin, oppression and injustice, misery and crime, strife and war, and all the deeds of darkness, may at length be vanquished and cease to hide Thee from Thy children's eyes; that earth and heaven may be linked together in every soul, making this life more beautiful, and that Death may be welcomed as Thy heavenly messenger on whose wings we are borne to the completion of our affections and aspirations here in a glorious eternity with Thee. Amen.

Meditation: A prophetic warning of the doom pronounced against a false civilization.

BY themselves moral reasons are never enough to justify a prediction of speedy doom upon any system or society. None of the prophets began to foretell the fall of Israel till they read, with keener eyes than their contemporaries, the signs of it in current history. And this, I take it, was the point which made a notable difference between them and one who, like them, scourged the social wrongs of his civilization, yet never spoke a word of its fall.

Juvenal nowhere calls down judgments, except upon individuals. In his time there were no signs of the decline

of the empire, even though, as he marks, there was a flight from the capital of the virtue which was to keep the empire alive. But the prophets had political proof of the nearness of God's judgment, and they spoke in the power of its coincidence with the moral corruption of their people. . . .

And it was not only for its suddenness that the apostles said the day of the Lord shall come as a thief, but also because of its methods. For over and over again has doom been pronounced, and pronounced truly, by men who in the eyes of civilization were criminals and monsters.

Now, apply these principles to the question of ourselves. It will scarcely be denied that our civilization tolerates, and in part lives by, the existence of vices which, as we all admit, ruined the ancient empires. Are the political possibilities of overthrow also present? That there exist among us means of new historic convulsions is a visit upon you of your iniquities. Nothing is too costly for justice, and God finds some other way of conserving the real results of the past.

Again, it is a corollary of all this, that the sentence upon civilization must often seem to come by voices that are insane, and its execution by means that are criminal. . . .

When we see the jealousies of the Christian peoples and their enormous preparations for battle, the arsenals of Europe which a few sparks may blow up, the millions of soldiers one man's word may mobilize; we must acknowledge the existence of forces that threaten the very vigor and the progress of Civilization herself.

George Adam Smith.

[Note.—The foregoing was written some seventeen years before the outbreak of the Great War.]

LXXXIV. A PRAYER FOR OUR ENEMIES

O GOD, to Whom all nations are dear, accomplishing Thy will in divers ways: Keep us, we pray Thee, to love our enemies and do good to them that hate us. Have mercy upon them even as we ask mercy for ourselves. Grant to them and to us an enlightened mind, a zeal for justice, a sincere desire to set aside all pride and vain ambition that they and we may unite in creating a new and better order wherein as brethren reconciled through Thy Son we may rejoice in the beauty of righteousness and peace.

Turn their hearts to Thee; forgive the wrongs that men have suffered at their hands; quicken their consciences with a vision of the true destiny to which Thou hast called them in fellowship and friendship with all the peoples of the earth.

So move upon their wills and ours that all hatred and malice may die and that the spirit of love may be born anew in them and in us. And these precious gifts we ask in the name of Him who is the Brother and Saviour of all Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. Amen.

Meditation: While resisting evil we must maintain a will of good toward the evil-doer.

IT is not resistance to evil that Christ's words forbid; they describe rather the attitude toward the wrong-doer that is demanded by the highest morality. . . . It

is the attitude of retaliation or revenge that is forbidden —the attitude of resisting the evil-doer by retaliating upon himself the evil he has done. . . . Paul has caught the spirit of His Master's teaching in the noble language in which he enjoins the Roman Christians not to recompense evil by evil, but to overcome evil with good. He sees that we do not overcome evil by returning it upon the evil-doer; by such a return we rather allow the evil to overcome ourselves. For retaliation or revenge is the expression of an evil will. It means, therefore, that evil is being perpetuated, has won a triumph, instead of being overcome; and the hereditary feuds of every society in which revenge has been allowed, furnish innumerable tragic proofs of this effect. Retaliation is thus directly antagonistic to the supreme principle of morality.

. . . But there is a limit even to righteous personal endurance. If a man of fair physical vigor is standing by while an outrage is being perpetrated on a child, or a woman, or a feeble man, and if he declines to interfere when he could prevent the wrong by his superior strength, if even he is not willing to stake his personal safety on the venture, it is hard to comprehend any casuistical dialectic which can absolve him from participation in the wrong. But if such resistance to evil is allowed and even demanded of the individual, much more does it come within the rights and obligations of an organized community acting in accordance with a reasonable constitution and reasonable laws.

J. C. Murray.

LXXXV. A PRAYER FOR ONE WHO HAS PASSED OVER

INFINITE Father-Spirit, in Whom all whom we call "dead" do live, I commend to Thy Fatherly love and care one dear to me whom Thou hast called out of the body into Higher life and experience. Grant that in that Sphere of Light and advancement all that is good and noble in him may be expanded and developed. Grant that anything weak and imperfect in him may be eliminated. Fill him with Thy Spirit that he may grow to full knowledge and love of Thee until he shall be made perfect, and keep him in close communion with me, until, in Thine own way and time, we are reunited. This I ask in the Name of Thy Perfect Manifestor, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Meditation: Selfish and passionate thoughts shut us out from the unseen world.

THERE is not one of us who does not perceive within himself good and evil, heaven and hell, self and Christ, flesh and spirit, the wholly human and the entirely divine. The exertion and the effort required of us for the development of the higher at the expense of the lower, is the measure of our earthly education, and the Father's object in sending us into the earthly life. A man may always know where he is, if he honestly desires it, by unflinchingly ascertaining

which set of impulses, in his very inmost self, his true secret self (not his outer show self, which speaks the false and conceals the true), most really dominate his life. Which set of impulses do you imagine most affect actions—those which originate in thought, or those which originate in sensation? . . . Surely those which originate in thought. Thought is the raw material of action; identification of thought with the appetites of the body inevitably results in breaches of the moral law; identification of thought with the Christ within cultivates the mind to right action. Thought is creative, thoughts are things. What "thought-atmosphere" are we creating around our lives? Our loved ones in the spirit world meet us in our "thought-atmosphere." Coarse, angry, vindictive, selfish, worldly thoughts build a barrier between us and the spirits in the unseen world. What proportion of thought, earnest, concentrated, determined thought, do any of us give in the course of twenty-four hours to the revealed mystery of the indwelling Christ, to the Infinite Universal Spirit pulsing through all things, to the soul-subduing pathos of that poem of a life lived by God Incarnate between Bethlehem and Calvary, that we might know the kind of life that He is desiring to live in each one of us now, compared with our anxious planning thoughts for health and pleasure and business? It is an ordinary recognized fact of our common humanity that strong thinking in a particular direction, concentration of mind upon one line of things, shuts out other sensations, and, when habitual, causes them to wither and die.

BASIL WILBERFORCE.

LXXXVI. FOR COMFORT IN THE PRESENCE OF DEATH

O GOD! From everlasting to everlasting Thou art God. Thy years fail not. Thine eternity underlies our time, giving consistency and meaning to our lives—otherwise we indeed spend our days as a tale that is told. We think of life's little day, and as we think we pray that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

While it is still day, help us to work and to serve the Eternal Goodness. We think of death, and rejoice that the death of our Lord has made Him the Lord of Death. Be Thou with us in the valley of the shadow, that we may fear no evil. And at eventime may there be light—and may there be the bridge of sunset into the eternal day.

But, O God, friend after friend departs. Who has not lost a friend? We grieve for the touch of a vanished hand and for the sound of a voice that is still. Do Thou comfort and sustain us with Thy presence and Thy love. As we cherish in our hearts the image of those we have loved long since and lost awhile, so we trust that Thou dost in Thy great Father-Heart.

We trust that Thy living love can not let those that are loved cease to be. If it be Thy will, may we meet again in Thy presence, where we shall be satisfied both with being in Thy likeness and

with the communion of souls throughout eternity. We ask, O God, in Thy name! Amen.

Meditation: In the world beyond personal identity will be preserved, and our hope of mutual recognition is justified.

MEN are tempted to suppose that death is going to be an impoverishment of our personality. But Scripture seems to me to teach the very opposite. It teaches that death will be the means not of impoverishing, but of glorifying our personality. Identity will, therefore, we might conjecture, be rather intensified, purified, augmented, than obliterated or extinguished. . . .

The powers of recollection and identification may fail here on earth with the failure of the nervous system and of the brain; but with the substitution of a higher and a more heavenly instrument, may we not confidently look for an increase rather than a diminution in the faculties which cement love, and which, in spite of time and in spite of change, permit sympathy and deeper friendship? Forgetfulness is not a sign of perfected humanity; rather it is a sign of weakened and debilitated brain power. . . . It is not, therefore, I believe, a mere metaphor of religious emotion to say we shall meet again, we shall know one another. There is little in earthly experience that can be compared with the joy of meeting again.

And in the life to come may we not trust Him that that joy, that wonderful joy—better, holier, more enduring than aught on earth—will not be taken away from us?

H. E. Ryle.

A MEDITATIONAL PRAYER FOR PEACE

GIVE peace in our time, O Lord. O Thou good Lord and lover of men, again and again we supplicate Thee, grant us Thy peace. Not that peace of yesterday, out of which we have been awakened and of which we are now ashamed, a truce which under the name of peace cloaked the spirit of war, while some prepared their weapons, and all sought by cunning to obtain what men now manfully battle for—not for this peace in name do we supplicate Thee, Thou God of peace. Not that we may fulfil our greed or indulge our slothfulness, that we may live once more at ease and return to our pleasures and exact again the labors of the poor—not for this do we presume to make our petition unto Thee, O God of righteousness. Not that we may see our desire upon our enemies do we dare to pray unto Thee, Thou God of love. Neither do we pray alone that war may cease, so that with immunity from danger we may continue to hate our enemies, for Thine ears are closed to such a prayer, and thou hast forbidden us to desire vengeance upon our adversaries. But we pray for Thy peace, which is of the heart. Grant us now Thy peace, good Lord, in righteousness and strong endeavor and in love; that all races of men that dwell upon the face of the whole earth may be one, as Thou, Creator, Father, art one; that by the exhortation

that is in Christ, by the incentive that is in love, by the fellowship in one Spirit, by the prompting of tender mercies and compassion, men may be of the same mind, having the same love, of one accord, of one mind, doing nothing through faction or through vainglory, but in lowliness of mind each counting other better than himself; not looking each to his own things, but each also to the things of others; that the same mind may be in us all which was in Christ Jesus, who for us sinners meekly put aside His heavenly glory, and for love of men became man, and was among us as one that serveth, who humbled Himself even unto death, yea, the death of the cross, that we, practising His humility, might be exalted together with Him, who now liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost ever one God, world without end.

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